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THE  
BEETHOVEN  
PIANOFORTE  
SONATAS

BY

PROFESSOR DR. CARL REINECKE

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AUGENER & CO.  
LONDON.



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AUGENER'S EDITION № 9210.

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THE

# BEETHOVEN PIANOFORTE SONATAS.

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LETTERS TO A LADY

BY

PROFESSOR DR. CARL REINECKE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS AT BERLIN, THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ART  
AT STOCKHOLM, ETC., ETC.

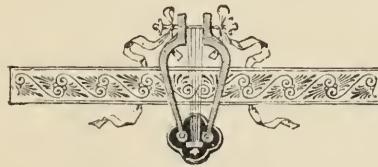
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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

E. M. TREVENEN DAWSON

A. L. A. M.



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# THE BEETHOVEN PIANOFORTE SONATAS.

LETTERS TO A LADY.

BY PROF. DR. CARL REINECKE.

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## 1.

Dear Friend,—There was really no apology needed when you sought to induce me to give you advice for the execution of the Beethoven Sonatas! It is certainly a pleasant prerogative of age to be permitted to serve and help youth with its accumulated experience. Years have elapsed since I responded to your wish to help you in the musical training of your children, and I am happy and proud when you tell me that they are now, by virtue of my advice, so far advanced as to be able to attempt successfully those sonatas of Beethoven which are not too difficult.

However, “What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well.” “Garnicht oder ganz!” (“All or nothing”) wrote Carmen Sylva for me under her portrait; and she is right. In like manner, if I write to you about the less difficult sonatas of Beethoven, I would also rather not keep silence about the others. Who knows how long I may yet be permitted to live, and whether I should be able later to respond to your further wishes? Lay aside for a while those letters by which you cannot yet profit; perhaps later on you will find in the then yellowed leaves yet here and there a grain of truth, a practical hint, some explanation, or the like.

And now to business!

So many poetical commentaries to Beethoven’s pianoforte sonatas have already been written—there need

be mentioned in this respect only those in A. B. Marx' Biography of Beethoven and the work of Elterlein—that it would be superfluous to increase the number of this mode of explanation, especially as it always remains doubtful whether the true comprehension of these masterpieces is really helped thereby.\* Certainly he who understands indeed perfectly the "architectural" structure of a piece of music, but possesses no susceptibility for the moods therein contained, will never fully recognize the beauty of the work in question. However, he who follows with dim perception the moods of the composition, but without being able to recognize the red thread which runs through the whole, will comprehend it just as little. Both must exist equally—susceptibility for the musico-poetical moods, and knowledge of the "architectural" structure. He to whom the first is wanting is past help, and I might almost pronounce him unmusical, even if he were in a position to recognize notes, chords, and keys by merely hearing them. It is, on the whole, wonderful how varied the endowment of the musically highly-gifted man appears. If there are, on the one hand, musicians who possess a prodigious memory and eminent gifts of intellect, but absolutely no creative talent, there are also, on the other hand, composers of importance who have not a fine ear, and to whom an exceptional memory is wanting.

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\* For how can it assist anyone's comprehension when Herr v. Elterlein relates that he "finds in the F major motive an *instantaneous balsam*," when he speaks of a "peculiarly fanciful tinge which overspreads it," and indulges, by preference, in similar phrases? And how can one place reliance on a writer on music who asserts that the A flat major sonata, Op. 26, "is the first of all Beethoven's sonatas in which the art form of the variation is adopted," who has consequently not noticed that the second movement of the sonata, Op. 14, No. 2, is likewise written in variation form; and who speaks of a "pedal-point on the A flat major chord"? He who wishes to write about music should be able to recognize variation as such, even if the composer has not written thereto that they *are* variations, and he should have a fair knowledge what a pedal-point is.

Although a witty person has asserted that the step from dilettante to artist is often only a small one, yet always such as the dilettante never can take, I am still of opinion that, for all that, there are dilettanti who surpass many musicians in *certain* respects, and I believe you are to be numbered among these. May my notes, then, help you to recognize that also as beauty in the Beethoven sonatas which one does not fully arrive at with a general susceptibility for the musically beautiful. And so you must, then, dear friend, permit me to play the pedagogue a little, in order first to give you a quite short exposition of the form of the first movement of a sonata.—The composer begins, apart from a possible introduction, with the first or principal Subject, which he develops according to requirement; to it follows the so-called modulating passage, which serves to introduce the second Subject. The development also of this second Subject, which always appears in another key than the first Subject (for a major sonata mostly in the key of the dominant, for a sonata in the minor usually in the relative major), depends entirely upon the judgment of the composer. When he has sufficiently developed it, he brings in the Coda, which, as its name tells us, is an appendage ("tail") that serves to strengthen the conclusion, and to make it more impressive. With the Coda the first part concludes, which conclusion is very often recognizable externally by the sign for repeat. Sometimes there is yet to be found between the second Subject and the Coda a passage which is called the bridge-passage\* and which is more devoted to florid movement, whilst the two Subjects accordingly are devoted more to the pathetic, the strongly rhythmical, or the lyrical, elegiac, also, perhaps, the humorous. After the close of the first part begins the so-called "Development,"

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\* In the concerto, which indeed (like the symphony, trio, quartet, etc.) is written in sonata form, the bridge-passage is an integral, indispensable part.

in which the composer works out one or several of the earlier motives, sometimes in contrapuntal, sometimes in free, style, throwing a different, poetical light on them, etc. When the composer has had enough of this style, he returns to the principal key and to the first Subject, and what now follows very often corresponds quite strictly to the first part, only with this difference, that the second Subject also now appears in the principal key. Commonly the coda at the end of the whole movement is further developed than was that at the end of the first part. It hardly needs mention that this form is uncommonly elastic, and capable of innumerable modifications. The characteristics will, however, be found easily recognizable in all genuine first Sonata-movements. I say in all *genuine* first Sonata-movements; for when Beethoven begins his C sharp minor Sonata with an Adagio, and his A flat major Sonata, Op. 26, with variations, he has dispensed with the real first Sonata-movement. But *you* must always kindly dispense in my letters with the *conclusion*. It would, however, be ever the same coda; and thus I end simply as

Yours,

CARL REINECKE.

Leipzig, October, 1894.

## II.

Whilst I now, my dear lady, pass on to analytical remarks on Beethoven's Sonatas separately, I hope I may reckon on your concurrence if I do not follow the Opus numbers, but advance from the more simple to the more complicated and more important, and also simply omit the quasi Sonatinas Op. 49. As material for practice, the latter are doubtless very charming, and the pupil can also very well exercise himself on them in analyzing the form; but, for the rest, they would not give rise to

interesting discussion. Let us turn, then, to Op. 14, No. 1, the favourite sonata in E major, in

Op. 14, places somewhat tinged with melancholy.\*

No. 1. The whole of the first movement has something soft, muffled, as predominant mood: scarcely any outbreak of strength occurs, only four bars have been marked *ff* by Beethoven, and not many even *forte*, whilst he often returns to *piano* after a *crescendo*, instead of ending with a *forte*. To the thoughtful player, this will influence the rendering of the entire movement. That the modulating passage closely conforms to the repetition of the first Subject an octave lower, and concludes with three loud chords on F sharp, you will at once perceive. On the other hand, it may, perhaps, have escaped you that from the 17th bar on, the principal Subject is to be found in the parts which are allotted to the left hand:—



This stands out more clearly in the parallel passage in the second part. The repetition of the second Subject lies, perceptibly enough, in the left hand, which must, therefore, be made more prominent than the right, which has to imitate the left quite simply. In the last four bars of the first part the left hand enters once more bearing the melody, with the fourth-progressions of the first Subject, and must accordingly be played with *cantabile* tone in spite of the prescribed *pianissimo*. The Development refers to this only in the first four bars, and the last ten bars before the re-introduction of the first Subject, whilst the intermediate bars appear to be wholly independent of it. It is, however, not impossible that

\* Herr von Elterlein designates the two sonatas, Op. 14, simply as "the weakest sonatas of the first Period," and on this account holds himself "excused from going into them in detail."

Beethoven (possibly without being himself aware of it) has formed the motive



out of the ninth bar, by rhythmical augmentation.



Already in the fourth bar appears the motive,



and is repeated by inversion in the 9th and 11th bars, again later on in the 17th, 19th and 20th bars, and thus plays, as you see, a certain *rôle*. The great masters have so much accustomed themselves to develop their ideas logically, that it were excusable if one imputed to them, once in a way, a combination of which they themselves have not thought. Permit me still, *à propos* of this movement, a couple of observations which may then serve for all similar cases. In the 15th and 16th bars Beethoven writes dots over the minims. This is in no wise a proof that Beethoven wants the note with the dot or dash above it to be absolutely short, but only that it should lose a little of its value\* (in this case scarcely a quaver). *One regards, therefore, the dot or dash over the note, not as an unconditional staccato sign, but only as a direction that the respective notes should be separated from those following.*

\* In his Trio for strings, Op. 9, No. 2, Beethoven supplies even semibreves with dots above them!

Should there be (as in the second Subject) dots and slurs above the notes, the separation of the single notes should be still slighter. We call this style of playing "mezzo staccato". The turn in the 39th bar induces me to quote the rule, that *when a turn is placed after a dotted note, the three notes of the turn must be played BEFORE the value of the dot, and that the principal note must be repeated at the place of the dot*. Singular as this rule may appear to many, since the turn is placed *after* the dot, it is accounted for very easily if one realizes that it was formerly the custom, not as now to set the dot which lengthens the note by one-half immediately behind the note, but not until that place where it belongs in conformity with the division of the bar. Beethoven wrote:—



and from this we perceive that the turn should be played before the third quaver:—



However, only those dotted notes are affected by this rule which form a *fraction* of a duple or quadruple note value; on the other hand, this rule does not come into requisition with such dotted notes as themselves form a whole bar, or the half or third of such an one, as  $\frac{1}{1}$  in  $\frac{3}{8}$ ,  $\frac{6}{8}$  or  $\frac{9}{8}$  time,  $\frac{1}{2}$  in  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{6}{4}$  or  $\frac{9}{4}$  time.

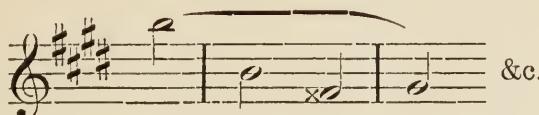
A peculiar mood, which might perhaps be designated as quiet resignation, prevails in the second movement. A painter on hearing this would perhaps think of a pale colour or of soft wavy lines; to another, this or that line of a poet will be brought to mind; while, on the other hand, many will give themselves up to the magic of the sounds, and maintain that the little piece puts them into a mood which neither poet nor painter could awaken in them—and I am of their number. But in order to awaken this mood also in the hearer, the player must avoid any rhythmical or dynamic sharpness in the execution of this movement. Beethoven has, indeed, prescribed some *sforzati*, but it ought never to be forgotten that the *sforzato* in *piano*, and in an elegiac piece of moderate movement, must be quite other than that in one of passionate movement. How often does not Beethoven prescribe *sforzati* even in the middle of a *fortissimo*! Moreover, the quaver of the principal Subject



ought not to be in the least shortened by holding on the dotted *e* rather too long. The trio in C major, marked "Maggiore," appears like a mild consolation, and whilst in the minor part there are still required several, if only muffled, accents, this trio moves on always *piano*, interrupted one single time by a slight increase of tone. Obviously, the bar immediately preceding the trio can only be played *legato* with the help of the pedal.

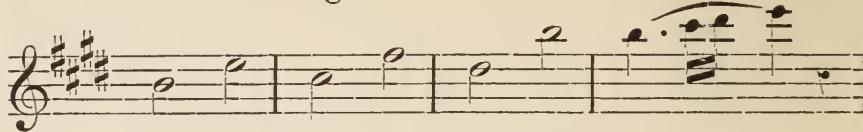
The last movement of this sonata is written in Rondo form. The essential part of this form is that the principal Subject frequently recurs, and is always alternated with other independent Subjects. The Rondo Subject of this movement extends up to the first double-bar, in the eighth bar; the first five bars are now repeated,

and the composer then makes use of the last motive in order to modulate to the dominant, B major. The very scanty second Subject



takes up only nine bars, and then yields the field again to the first Subject. With the G major part once more a new idea makes its appearance, and leads in its turn to the first Subject in E major; the second Subject follows in A major, and then, finally, the principal Subject again, in different variants. Unassuming as the movement is, so also should be its performance. In the middle part in G major, Beethoven requires single notes to be played staccato in the middle of the *legato*. This requirement is not difficult to meet, if one is careful that the finger in question (in this case the 4th or 5th) strikes from a somewhat greater height than the rest of the fingers are allowed to do. Obviously a somewhat stronger accent is also connected with it.—Are you becoming impatient, my dear lady? Do you think we shall never come to an end if I treat the remaining sonatas similarly in detail? Take comfort in the assurance that I will not repeat myself, whilst I confidently assume that you will ponder well at each analogous place the advice and hints which I have already given you once. And thus I intend also to make use of this sonata at once, in order to bring to your notice a peculiarity of Beethoven's which has perhaps so far escaped you, but which admits of being proved extremely often in his works. This is his mode of theme invention, of melody formation, apparently become a principle with him, which consists in his aiming upwards in his themes to one topmost peak, the highest note of the theme, and then sinking back again, but seldom introducing this

highest note twice. The first Subject of the first movement rises to the high *e*



and then sinks back; in like manner the second Subject to the *g* sharp,



the Subject of the Allegretto



mounts as high as *b*, that of the trio up to *g*. The Rondo Subject finds its highest point in *a*.—

At Glion, in French Switzerland, I stood and gazed at the Dent du Midi. An elderly gentleman stepped up to me and said:

“Look here, I have come here regularly for many years, but I can never yet reconcile myself to the outlines of this mountain. One does not at all know which peak is the summit.”

Then it occurred to me that these outlines form an analogy to those naïve melodies such as children sing in their games and repeat everlastingly, and which have been sung by you as well as me—*e.g.*



Der Abt ist nicht zu Hause, er ist zu ei-nem Schmaus-

A Beethoven melody, however, always brings to my mind the noble outlines of a Pilatus, where it rises, lightly falls, and rises again, until at length the *one* summit is attained. You will search for such climaxes in Beethoven's themes with interest and profit. But even as the good God has created no further mountains like the Pilatus, but also many a Dent du Midi, so you will find in Beethoven also certain Subjects of which my remark does not apply.

The second Sonata in this set, in G major, is the more cheerful twin-sister of the preceding one.

p. 14, No. 2. Nowhere seriousness, as in the second movement of that one, and in the last movement even a certain graceful humour. About the execution of the first motive I have some observations to make forthwith, which have always been esteemed by me as a principle of execution. *If a Subject begins with an incomplete bar (up-beat), the player has to take the greatest care that the hearer is clear about the time-signature, by means of the necessary accents.* He who in this case emphasizes, even if only slightly, any one of the three semiquavers which form the incomplete bar (up-beat), would lead the hearer astray. The *b* must deceive the first, of course weak, accent, and the entry of the left hand must also be very soft, because otherwise the hearer might take the second quaver for the first.

Consequently, the dynamic signs would be as follows:—

A second rule of execution is this: that the player, when a motive is, as here, repeated in a similar manner,

should never execute it both times in exactly the same way. Whether the second time he plays softer or louder, depends on the performer's delicacy of perception; in this case, I should be for a softer *nuance* at the repetition, which is suggested also by the circumstance that Beethoven transfers the harmonic foundation the second time into the higher, less loud, octave. In the Coda, which begins in the 17th bar before the close of the first part, the notes of five quavers' duration



are each time to be sounded so loudly that they remain audible up to the very last. On this account the bass and middle parts must be taken very softly.—Unlike the preceding Sonata, Beethoven has in this one turned the principal motive to good account very frequently in the Development (over thirty times), while he lets the second Subject be heard only in passing. The Period in which the left hand has the principal motive, while the right has to play a harmonic figure of accompaniment in semiquaver triplets, induces me to say to you that the difficulty which arises when one hand has to play two notes and the other a triplet at the same time, is best overcome by first playing the figure of the accompaniment alone for a long time, and only then letting the other hand join in when the accompaniment is almost mechanically executed. One then concentrates one's entire attention and energy on the hand *not* accompanying: in this case, therefore, on the left hand. Under all circumstances, I consider it a mistake to want to divide the melody according to the accompaniment. It should always be the other way about supposing that the player's lack of energy really should make a mathematical division necessary. The secon-

movement of this Sonata consists of a Subject extending over twenty bars, three Variations, and a short Coda. In the first variation, the theme lying in the middle part is transferred, here and there, from one hand to the other (*e. g.* bar 3, bars 9, 10, and 11), and it must accordingly be carefully attended to that the theme, in spite of it, sounds as uninterrupted as if it were played by one hand alone. In a much-used edition of the Beethoven Sonatas, the editor has felt it incumbent on him to notate the last variation in the following way:—



while Beethoven wrote quite simply as follows:—



I consider that addition quite superfluous, for, without mentioning that Beethoven wrote very exactly, and spared no pains to make known his intentions (see the complicated way the simple bass figure at the beginning of this Sonata is written down), the notes which form the theme will sound forth without further assistance, because they are the highest, and every intentional bringing into prominence is bad. One notes the design, and is put in a bad temper. Have you recognized in the theme of the movement the principle of the Beethoven melody-formation again? How Beethoven rises from small *g* to thrice-accented *c*, and returns again to once-accented *c*, without introducing the highest note more than once?

To play the final movement, marked “Scherzo”, with the correct emphasis, one must be clear about it that the bars always belong together in pairs, and that the movement (Beethoven forgive me!) ought really to

have been written in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time. In Mozart we find an example of the other kind. The duet "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen," in the *Zauberflöte*, originally began with a complete bar, and the voice part with a single quaver as up-beat,



while it now begins with a half bar as up-beat. Because, however, in pursuance of the original setting the close fell on the fourth instead of on the first quaver, Mozart altered the barring throughout the whole piece, and consequently it now runs:—



Undeniably, the declamation in the original was the more correct, and one is justified in asking why Mozart has not had recourse to the expedient of writing this number in  $\frac{3}{8}$  time. Beethoven has, for the rest, written four quaver rests at the close of the Finale, after the last quaver, whereby again two whole bars, with the incomplete bar at the beginning of the movement, are completed. Had Beethoven not himself had the feeling that the movement was really in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time, he would probably have wound up the movement as follows:—



t must therefore be played:—



but not:—



and the second Subject in the following manner:—



not, however, with an accent on the first quaver of each bar. It is scarcely necessary to mention, that when I speak of an accent here I mean only a graceful, weak one. A rather hard accent would be wanting in taste. One weak, yet always clearly audible, is needed throughout, to make the hearer at once clear as to the rhythm, and that is in this case all the more important, as a careless accent might quite easily make the motive appear in duple time:—



or even



Further hints I consider superfluous. He who does not feel that the second Subject must be played

with other expression than the first is a hopeless case and to this class neither you, dear friend, nor your little daughter belong. However—my epistle has become too long! So I break off. Yours, C. R.

*Leipzig. Beethoven's birthday.*

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### III.

Your question, my dear lady, respecting the form of the middle movement of a sonata, I had expected and I now hasten to give you some particulars about it. A sonata consists of three or four separate movements, apart from rare exceptions (to these belong Moscheles' "Sonate mélancolique," and Hans Huber's Sonata Op. 31, in *one* movement, as also Beethoven's Sonatas in *two* movements, Op. 54, 78, 96, and 111). The form of the first movement is already clear to you and I have also already spoken about the Rondo form in which the last movement is often—in former times preferably—written. These two "corner" movements are, as you will know by experience, with few exceptions of a lively character, so-called quick movements; and in order to set against these a salutary contrast, the composer inserted between these two movements a slow one—the *Andante* or *Adagio*, *Largo* or *Larghetto*. Later on, yet a fourth movement was added, commonly *Minuet* (from which in time developed the *Scherzo*), and was generally given a place after the slow movement. This latter is written in the most diverse forms. In the G major Sonata, Op. 14, we found an *Andante* with variations (the nature of which will probably be clear to you, as to nearly everyone); in other sonatas, the somewhat simplified form of the first sonata-movement is made use of; whilst in the E major Sonata, Op. 10, we meet with a middle movement in the compound song form. The nature of the compound song form is

once clear as soon as one knows the simple song form, and on that account I will first attempt to acquaint you with this.

As in language a period is formed out of an Antecedent and a Consequent, so also in music. The simplest construction of a musical period is compounded of a fore-phrase (Antecedent) extending to four bars, and an after-phrase (Consequent) of equal length. If the period thus formed finishes in the same key as it began, it can be, under certain circumstances, a song complete in itself, and, indeed, there are a great number of folk-songs and even artistic songs which are of eight bars. Should this one period, however, not end in the principal key, the composer is obliged to add another period to it, perhaps also a third (which is then, commonly, a somewhat modified repetition of the first); and thus there are movements in simple song form which consist of *one* period, as well as of two or three periods. If to a piece thus formed is opposed another in similar form, in order to then re-introduce the first, and to finish with the same, the compound song form is the result. Accordingly, we recognize in the theme to the variations which form the middle movement of the G major Sonata, Op. 14, the simple song form, while the middle movement of the E major Sonata furnishes a model for the compound song form. The Coda which we find here is not in itself a necessary ingredient, but the composer often feels the need of giving his movement a more satisfactory finish as much as at the end of the first or second part of a first sonata-movement. In the *Minuets* and *Scherzi* of the Sonatas, Op. 2, Nos. 1 and 2, Op. 7, Op. 10, No. 3, Op. 22, Op. 26, Op. 28, for example, Beethoven has added no Coda. Again, on the other hand, he has in Op. 2, No. 3, in many of his *Trios*, etc. I have mentioned already that if the composer writes the slow movement in the form of the first sonata-movement, he modifies this, and indeed

reduces the so-called Development to a minimum, or even entirely omits it.

In the hope that my explanations may have been really clear to you, I conclude, with the promise not to occupy myself again in the next letter with so much dull theory.

C. R.

*Leipzig, January, 1895.*

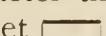
#### IV.

It is infinitely difficult to arrange the Beethoven Sonatas progressively, and I am prepared for some opposition, dear friend, if I now let the three Sonatas, Op. 10, follow, instead of the Sonatas, Op. 2. But, after all, it must be admitted that in the latter there are to be found some movements of such difficulty as do not occur in Op. 10, while, on the other hand, in the first three sonatas no single movement is replete with such depth of feeling as the *Largo* in the Sonata, Op. 10, No. 3.

The construction of the first movement of the first Sonata in C minor Op. 10, No. 1. gives occasion for some remarks, because

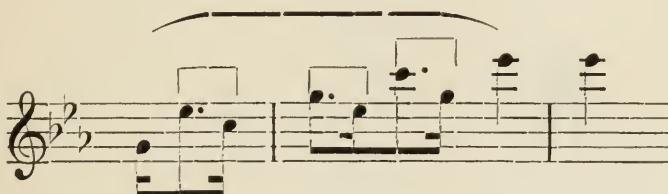
it is richer in independent motives than is otherwise usually the case. For in the Development an entirely *new* idea enters with the 13th bar, which even preferably provides the material for the working out; and even the modulating passage in the first part, running thus:—



bears a more melodious character than commonly. That the bar indicated by a bracket  is made use of six times during the pedal-point on B $\flat$  (bars 49-56) shows once more how logically Beethoven has developed his ideas, how one always results from the other, and how mere arbitrariness scarcely ever prevails. The principal motive



gives occasion for the remark that one must always, in such cases, so conceive of the grouping as I have indicated by brackets, but not thus:—



to which, it is true, the notation might mislead one. That, for all that, the strictest *legato* should be observed, I mention in order to obviate any misunderstanding. The turn in the sixth bar of the second Subject



can be interpreted in various ways, and executed accordingly. While in the Stuttgart Edition the following mode of performance is taught:—



Ludwig Klee, in his excellent work, "Die Ornamentik der Clavier-Musik" (which in other respects I cannot sufficiently recommend to you), on page 16 prescribes its execution in the following way:—



I myself incline entirely towards the latter reading and execution (as is also proved by my Edition of Beethoven's Sonatas, which appeared already many years ago), only with the difference that I never would perform, and accordingly prescribe, the ornament in quite strict time—in triplets, semiquavers, etc. In this case I would, therefore, if I might not make use of small notes

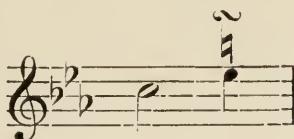


rather write in the following manner:—



and indicate by the addition of dynamic signs that the B-flat which follows the turn is to be taken very softly. "*Tant de bruit pour une omelette?*" ("Much ado about nothing?") Oh no! it is not too much ado; and without mentioning that in itself an omelette is not by any means to be despised, there is in a work of art like a Beethoven Sonata, scarcely anything which one dare consider and treat as trifling and unimportant. But ornamentation plays a large rôle in the classics, and one should devote to it searching study. In the

29th bar of the second part is to be found once more a turn on the execution of which opinions differ.



Klee gives the generally-known rule: "*If the sign is over a note, the turn begins with the upper auxiliary*", thus:—



The Stuttgart Edition prescribes the following:—



and by this supposes that Beethoven wrongly placed the turn *over* the note, and that he really should have written it *after* the last crotchet ( $\text{c}\flat$ ). Take your choice, my dear lady! In my Edition you will find the first reading.

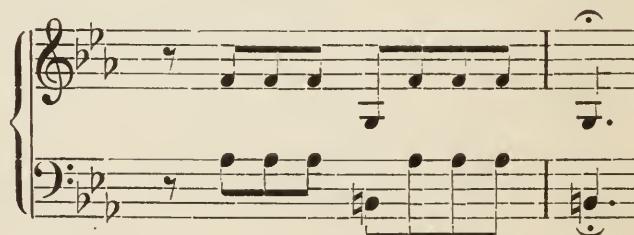
The *Adagio* of this Sonata has the form of a first sonata-movement, only with the qualification that any Development is excluded. In the sixth bar of the Subject is an arpeggio sign  $\{\}$ , and I make use of the opportunity to warn you against the too broad separation of the notes from the lowest bass note to the highest treble one. The melody runs:—



and therefore the  $\text{a}\flat$  must sound in the closest connection with the preceding  $\text{d}\flat$ ; this would, however, be prevented by a slow arpeggio upwards from the

bass. In general, the arpeggio sign signifies that the chord should not be struck quite together, which in this case would, of course, sound hard. Should bar 21, and the still more awkward parallel passage later on not be a complete success, I would not only allow, but even recommend, a division between the two hands. In a Study one may not allow oneself any lightening of a difficulty; but a Beethoven Sonata is no mere Study, and especially if one plays it before people, it matters little with what fingering a difficult passage is played, but only whether the difficulty is, upon the whole, mastered. On the execution of the turns I will not express myself further, for I have promised you not to repeat myself. It seems to me also superfluous, almost insulting, to specially direct your attention to the wonderful fervour ("Innigkeit") of the movement.

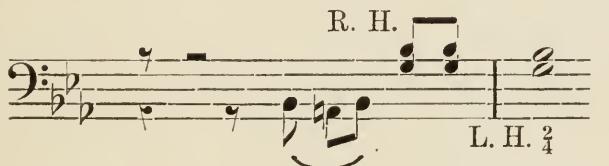
The last movement gives small occasion for special remark. For me personally it has, it is true, a very special significance, for it once brought me in the most unpleasant box on the ears in my life! That happened as follows: I played the sonata at my father's out of a manuscript copy, which, in our straitened means in those days, was tendered, because at that time *one* sonata cost not much less than nowadays a whole volume. In the 11th bar of the second part, the bass clef had been forgotten in the upper staff, and I played quite confidently



which had sounded to me not at all bad—even quite original! However, scarcely had I put my foot in it

with this unlucky misprint, when down came the box on the ears upon my devoted head. And thus it comes about that still nowadays I cannot hear this movement without a certain tragic mood taking possession of me. Forgive this relation of a personal experience that has, to be sure, nothing at all to do with the character of a Beethoven Sonata.

For the simultaneous playing of the quaver triplets and semiquavers in the 35th and 36th bars, what I said *à propos* of the G major Sonata, Op. 14, No 2, applies. The execution here, where Beethoven prescribes *prestissimo*, is, as regards the division, still easier than in that Sonata. At the beginning of the second part the figure in the left hand is difficult for small hands. Performing it in the following manner



will make it essentially easier.

In the 17th bar before the end of the sonata, the accent must fall on the first note of the ornament, not on the *g*, thus:—



It is a rule that the time occupied by an ornament may only be taken from that note to which the ornament belongs—in this case, therefore, only from the *g*, not the *c*; consequently the *f* must be struck exactly with the beginning of the new bar. I sign myself, however, without any ornament as

Yours, C. R.

Leipzig, Feb. 4, 1895.

## V.

My dear Lady,—We shall be able to pass somewhat quickly over the Sonata in F major Op. 10, No. 2. which follows, for it presents no difficulties of importance either as regards technical execution, or with respect to its comprehension. I only give the good advice to adhere strictly to all the composer's indications as to dynamics, rhythm, etc., down to the veriest trifles; the result of which is sounder than if I were to talk foolishly to you about the "green fir-tree" *Allegro*, about "cloud shadows" and "glimpses of sunshine" in the *Allegretto*, about "chuckling goblins" or such-like that pursue their own way in the *Presto*. I was once witness how a conductor found fault with his, apart from this very miserable, orchestra, on account of the execution of a passage in a symphony, and sought to direct the musicians in the right way, by instructing them that the passage in question must sound "ganz schwefelgelb" ("quite sulphur-yellow"). By this means he indeed got the good people, and bad musicians, to play now for the first time quite like a "Schwefelbande" ("set of rascals"), but the passage itself did not sound "schwefelgelb" ("sulphur-yellow")! Had he told them simply what they ought to do in order to produce the effect desired by him—be it that he had wanted a stronger accent, a *sul ponticello* of the violins, or anything else—he would thus have attained something. With his metaphor he gained precisely nothing.

As regards the Development in the first movement, a similar observation has to be made as about the Sonata in E major, Op. 14; the first ten bars refer to the last two bars of the first part, and so do the last (about) twenty bars before the D major part. What lies between, however, is difficult to trace back in any way to a motive of the first part. At all

vents, the pianist must play the three quavers, in themselves so insignificant looking,



with the consciousness that they have a significance as motive.

The shake in the second part of the *Allegretto*, in the bar before the first pause, has to begin with the principal note—that is, with *f*—as also the shake in *c* later on, which, by the way, cannot consist of more than five notes (*c, d<sub>2</sub>, c, b<sub>2</sub>, c*), for the short duration of the crotchet makes a longer shake impossible.

In my opinion, the D major Sonata which now follows is the most important of the p. 10, No. 3. three which form the 10th Opus. In the first movement, in spite of all economy, a great wealth of ideas exists. At the side of the principal motive enter both the subsidiary themes—that in B minor as well as that in A major—are independent Subjects. It is wonderful how Beethoven has used up the first four notes of the descending scale of D major! Immediately after the first pause they are employed uninterruptedly for the completion of the first period (this time of ten bars), and in A major, from the 66th bar on, we find the motive made use of more than twenty times uninterruptedly. And when Beethoven finally proceeds downwards by consecutive degrees from twice-accented *e<sub>2</sub>* to contra-A, we must confess that a diatonic scale as written by Beethoven is something very different from those which, say, Czerny wrote. Schumann asserted this, somewhere, of the chromatic scale, and referred at the same time to Beethoven's E<sub>2</sub> major Concerto. To me, however, the above-mentioned passage appears still more striking, for in the E<sub>2</sub> major Concerto the

chromatic scale appears only as counterpoint against the principal motive, but here the scale formed out of the first four notes of the Subject, is the essential. How Beethoven has in other respects "worked it out" thematically, I leave to your sharp eyes and ears to discover. I will only call your attention to the augmentation of the motive in the bass, which Beethoven introduces four times in the last eleven bars.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for bassoon. The top staff is in bass clef, common time, and has four measures. The bottom staff is also in bass clef, common time, and has three measures. Both staves have a key signature of one sharp. Measures are separated by vertical bar lines. In the top staff, the first four measures are grouped together by a rectangular box. In the bottom staff, the first three measures are grouped together by a rectangular box.

I see you smile, and imagine the question hovering on your lips, Whether it is not dangerous to infer such allusions—whether the like are not pure accidental?

I might boldly assert No! To the master, nothing in his work is a trifle, and he has so fully accustom himself to designing logically and letting the result follow organically, like the plant sprouts from seed, that mere accident hardly enters his head.

Respecting the motive,

The image shows a single staff of musical notation for bassoon. The staff is in bass clef, common time, and has one measure. The measure is highlighted by a rectangular box.

I have yet to mention that it was written in the other editions as follows:—

The image shows a single staff of musical notation for bassoon. The staff is in bass clef, common time, and has one measure. The measure is highlighted by a rectangular box.

nd that the Stuttgart Edition accordingly requires this mode of performance:—



When I at one time edited Beethoven's pianoforte works for the Breitkopf & Haertel complete edition, was very unfortunate about this, in that all the older editions submitted to me for comparison showed the *short* appoggiatura, while this was quite uncongenial to me, and I had from the beginning always treated the *d* as a long appoggiatura. As a conscientious editor, however, I dared not urge my own individual conception. But how glad I was when the well-known investigator, Gustav Nottebohm, later on communicated how he had found out a manuscript copy from Beethoven's possession, in which the latter had corrected the long appoggiatura wherever this motive appears! This same Stuttgart Edition adds a *crescendo* at the beginning, before the pause on *a*. I prefer a continued *piano*, and sudden *sforzato*. Why should Beethoven have forgotten the *crescendo* at *this* place and later on at the return of the same passage in the second part, while he expressly prescribes it a few bars later, before the pause on *f*?

One pauses before the *Largo e mesto* now following, with awe, and almost hesitates to waste words about it. Again I can only exhort:—Every direction of Beethoven, even the smallest, is to be observed, and nothing need then be added in order to produce a profound effect. The opinion expressed in the Stuttgart Edition, that the *c* on the 3rd and 6th quavers of the 6th bar after the double-bar doubtless originated with Beethoven himself, is proved by Nottebohm's investigations to be also erroneous. Beethoven wrote:—



but not



This likewise applies, naturally, to the analogous passage appearing two bars later with the *d*.

I should like still to point out to you the relationship between the first motive and the wonderful piece from the music to *Egmont*, "Clärchen's Tod b  
zeichnend" ("expressive of Clärchen's death"):



The Minuet scarcely gives occasion for any special remarks; the passage where the Subject enters combined with the shake on *a*, must certainly be practised. Those who cannot stretch sufficiently may play the *f* *z* *e* with the thumb of the left hand, and yet smaller hand may do this with judicious use of the pedal. With a motive that sounds like a question begins the Rondo, even as the first *Allegro* begins with a question. It is wonderful how Beethoven turns to account these three notes, which appear in the course of the movement, probably a hundred times in their original form and in the most varying transformations. It will give you pleasure to trace out every entry of this motive, and obviously the execution of the piece will be so much the more perfect the clearer the performer is about each combination; only he must take care to purposely make the motive prominent each time, in a kind of instructive way! only one is oneself conscious of what one is playing the piece will then become clear also to the hearer.

that Beethoven's chromatic scale is quite another thing from that which Herz wrote, Schumann has, with accurate perception, asserted, as I have already mentioned. He could have cited also, as example and proof, the 18th bar of this movement. The second Subject begins in the 17th bar, and contains a chromatic motive from which the chromatic scale results, which also occurs again later on, and thus enters also, only motived ("motivirt"), in the final Coda.—With kindest regards, yours,

C. R.

*Leipzig, March, 1895.*

## VI.

My time is at present less taken up than formerly, so you must put up with it if I now  
Op. 2, No. 1. become fonder again of scribbling. Prepare yourself for a long epistle! Of the three Sonatas dedicated to Haydn, Op. 2, the first by far the shortest; by its intellectual tenor, however, points perhaps more to the future Beethoven than the two following do. The first Subject reminds one voluntarily of the Finale of the G minor Symphony of Mozart.

Mozart.

Beethoven.

Altogether, this theme of Mozart's seems to have made an unusual impression on Beethoven, for we learn through Wasielewski, in his estimable biography of Beethoven, that the latter consciously formed the subject of the third movement of the C minor Sym-

phony out of this theme. That is to say, both themes are to be found in one of his sketch-books, as noted down in Beethoven's hand, one close against the other:—

Mozart.

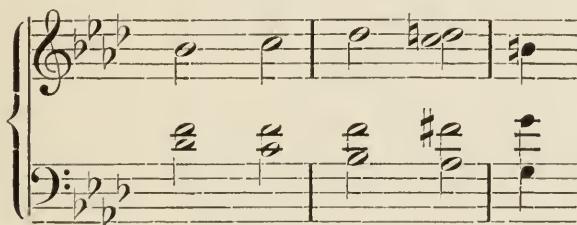
Beethoven.

This by the way. I find this fact, however, so interesting that I cannot refrain from informing you of it.—

In all the fingered editions of Beethoven's Sonatas known to me, I find in the 21st and 22nd bars the following fingering, which, it is true, is the simplest and most obvious:—

This, however, presents the difficulty that in the prescribed fast *tempo*, the thumb of the left hand has to glide very quickly from the *e* to the *d*. I obviate the evil by prescribing the following:—

s you will find also in my Edition. The manner and method by which Beethoven turns the earlier motives to good account in the Development, is so lucid and clear that it would be foolish of me to venture on an analysis. It will remain an open question whether, in the 14th bar of the second part, the penultimate quaver should be *d* or *d*. The last half-bar decidedly points to C minor already, and if one would divest the 13th and 14th bars of ornament, the following very natural harmony would result:—



But it is not impossible that Beethoven intended *d* as a suspension of *c*. Certainly, at the time when he wrote these Sonatas he only rarely called for such harshnesses. In any case it seems to me hazardous to peremptorily affirm that *d* should be recognized as the correct reading. If Beethoven forgot already two bars later the  $\sharp$  before *d*, as has been proved, why may he not have forgotten it here also?

The theme of the Adagio is borrowed from the Quartet in C major (for pianoforte, violin, viola, and violoncello), composed in 1785, and is there written in the following manner:—

The image displays four staves of musical notation for a piano. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature is one flat. The notation includes various note values (eighth and sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings like  $p$  (piano) and  $f$  (forte). The music consists of a melodic line in the upper voices and harmonic support in the lower voices. The style is characteristic of Beethoven's piano music, with its complex harmonic structures and rhythmic patterns.

There do not occur many similar cases with Beethoven, of the employment of one and the same idea several times. The most striking example will always be the fourfold use of the Finale Subject from the

Boica, which also forms the Subject of the pianoforte Variations, Op. 35; again appears, in the Ballet music, "Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus", and finally as independent *Contre-danse*.

It is interesting to observe in this movement, with what a wealth of variants Beethoven provides each repetition of an idea formerly appearing in the simplest setting. In the 24th bar occurs an ornament entirely similar to that in the slow movement of the minor Sonata, Op. 10, and I may remind you once more of the rule formulated at the end of my letter concerning it. It is true, this conflicts with my promise, given earlier, not to repeat myself, but I have experienced so extremely often that this rule was not known, not understood or laid to heart, that as Cato never forgot his "ceterum censeo," so I also would again enjoin this rule at every opportunity.

In the following movement, the sequence of chords the Sixth, occurring in the Trio, requires extended practice. I take the liberty of drawing your attention to the fingering in my edition, for I have not found in a single other. In the Finale, the *piano* and *forte* or *fortissimo* passages, pressing closely on one other, must be strongly contrasted. It is worthy to remark that Beethoven closes the first part in the dominant minor, not—as mostly happens, and also the first movement of this Sonata—in the relative major key.

The Sonata in A major which follows has a far more lively character, about which it p. 2, No. 2. will strike you that Beethoven introduces the second Subject, not in E major, A major. but in E minor. The following passage a rock on which young pianists almost always suffer shipwreck:—



and thus it appears comprehensible how in all editions the following facilitation is recommended:—



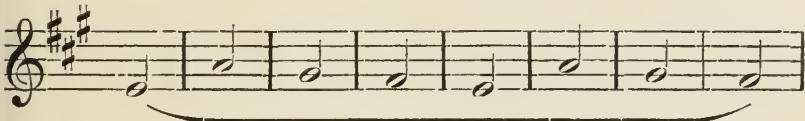
but it is entirely incomprehensible to me that the same figure ascending has been provided with quite the same fingering, although the left hand has now to take the last semiquaver, in order to essentially facilitate the passage:—



A difference of opinion exists with respect to the minim *e* in the 14th bar before the sign for repeat. The Steingräber edition roundly asserts that this was not derived from the author, and that just in case an alteration in conformity with the analogous passage (in the 14th bar before the end of the movement) is not admissible. If I, personally, cannot agree with this view, I willingly grant that habit is very powerful, and that one parts unwillingly from what one has never known or played otherwise. Fortunately, the matter is this time of no importance, as Beethoven later on wrote,



his ghost will not be angry with us if we play at the close of the first part likewise,

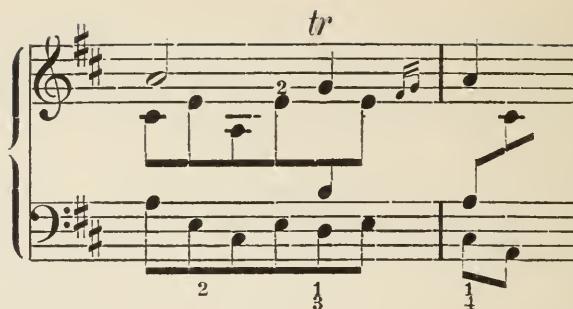


wonder if the passage appearing shortly before —



has not possibly had an influence on the invention of that melodic phrase in minims? I have indicated by crosses the relation of the two phrases to one another. Now, if you call me a sophist, I will not be angry with you!

In the Development part of this movement, there is probably scarcely a note to be found that has not been evolved from the motives of the first part. I cannot sufficiently impress upon you to always keep your pupils to the analysis of the Development, which not only forms the power of musical comprehension, but also exercises the most salutary influence on the execution. In the 11th bar of the Largo, the last two quavers of the middle voice present a difficulty to the simultaneous shake on  $g\sharp$ , and the middle voice will never be fully *legato* if the following fingering is not made use of: —



In the Scherzo, many a left hand stumbles over the figure at the beginning of the second part. I have always found that the passage is essentially facilitated if one takes the first and the last note of the semiquaver group with different fingers, thus:—

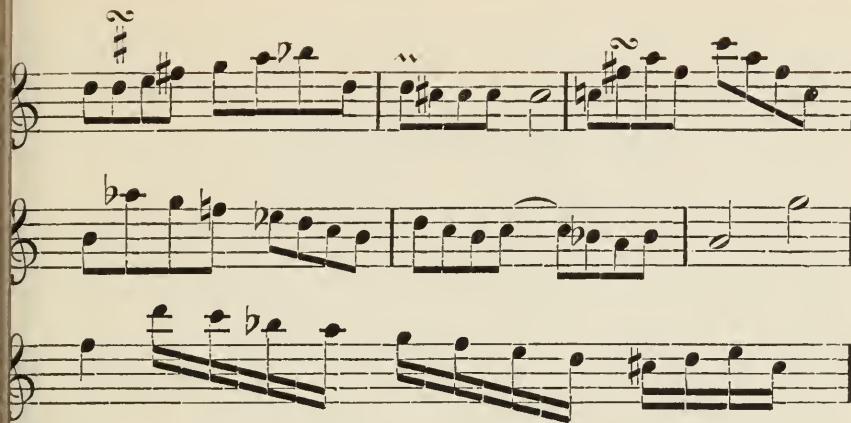


In the Rondo Subject the pedal must help, in order that the two notes,



may be played *legato* as the composer requires. S more essential is it, however, that the  $\text{g} \sharp$  does receive the slightest accent.

To pass on to the Sonata in C major. You will be interested to learn that the second movement of Op. 2, No. 3, principal motive of the first Allegro in C major, likewise borrowed from the above-named pianoforte Quartet in C major. The theme in question is written in the Quartet as follows:—



hence results a tolerably exact accordance with the similar passage in the Sonata. The turns in the 45th and 46th bars of this movement acquire different significations. It is, upon the whole, scarcely to be supposed that Beethoven desired the execution, as it would be in accordance with custom,



and, accordingly, many decide for the following reading:—



thers for this:—



As in the quick *tempo* of the movement (*Allegro con moto*) the time could scarcely suffice for the neat performance of the reading (b), I should myself decide in favour of the reading (a). The short shake in

the Coda can only be performed in the following way:—



and I strongly recommend that the last note of the turn be taken with the same finger with which the shake is begun. If this shake remained ever wanting in clearness with other fingering, my appoggiatura always proves serviceable. Also in the Development of this Sonata, we meet with an Episode of twelve bars which is quite independent, and exhibits no connection with the principal motives. After the pedal point on *g*, extending to ten bars, the principal motive in C major re-appears, and ends with the eighth bar and now the bass imitates the last two bars of the melody, which ought not to be overlooked by the player. The cadenza towards the close of the movement gives me the opportunity for the advice that *you never allow this sort to be played at a uniform pace*. Cadenzas of this kind are mostly worked out from one figure, and sound like a bit of a Czerny Study in the middle of a Beethoven Sonata if one reads them off at uniform pace and tone. A quiet beginning with slight tone, an increase of speed and tone up to the climax, and *nuances* to correspond, are always very necessary in such cases. Some editions recommend, for the third and second bars before the end, a descent of the hand as far as Contra-C. To me it is not congenial to suddenly hear these heavy Contratenor notes in the unassuming pianoforte style which Beethoven cultivates in these Sonatas, just as it often affects my ear strangely if the right hand goes so far in making analogous passages uniform. It is even liked now-a-days to carry the trumpets farther at certain passages in the Beethoven Symphonies than the composer has done, and the reason given for this procedure

ng is that the instruments in use at that time did not permit of such an employment, which otherwise Beethoven himself would not have allowed to escape him. But it is forgotten, according to my experience, that a colouring is immediately given to the passages in question which, moreover, is quite unknown in the purely orchestral works of Beethoven.

In the Adagio which follows, let the *tempo* be at once taken so quickly that an *accelerando* is not necessary at the entry of the E minor part. Beethoven knew as well as we do what has to be prescribed when a change of *tempo* is wished for. In the ninth bar before the end the turns might be performed in the following manner:—



The Scherzo ought not to be begun so fast that a (rather necessary) slackening for the Trio is allowed to become in any way striking. Care should also be taken that the first three quavers of the Scherzo do not sound like a triplet. In the final movement there is again one of those rocks which, even in Beethoven's less difficult works, are the terror of the player. I need not indicate this passage, for your dear pupil will discover the rock soon enough. Success to its courageous circumnavigation!—Yours ever,

C. R.

April, 1895.

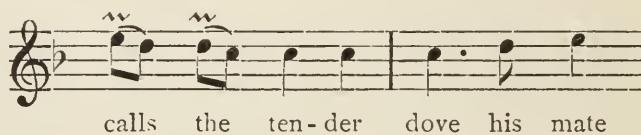
## VII.

We must soon come to the end, dear friend, and therefore you must wade through a double letter this time!

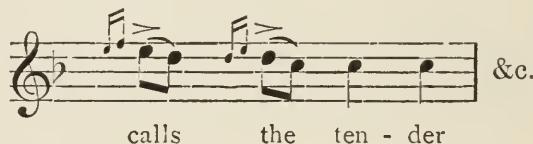
The Sonata in E $\flat$  major, Op. 7, breathes unmixed cheerfulness; grace and charm Op. 7, E $\flat$  major. are its principal attributes, and even in the short minor episode of the third and fourth movements the mood experiences no real gloom. The *passing shakes* occurring in the first Allegro must, as always, be *played with the accent on the first note*; in the rather quick *tempo* of this movement they will sound almost like semiquaver triplets.



Should you, for the rest, be doubtful about the correctness of the above rule, with respect to the passing shake, I may remind you of the passage in Haydn's *Creation*,



which would be quite inconceivable in the following mode of performance:—



But why should the execution be different in instrumental works from what it is in vocal?

The rests in the Largo Subject ought not to be in the least curtailed. Have you not often already been conscious what wonderfully beautiful rests Beethoven has composed? In this point also, as in so many others, he has taken his place as Haydn's heir.

To be sure, in Haydn the rests have mostly a humorous, in Beethoven a serious, even tragic, effect.

I mention only the *Coriolanus* overture, the Funeral March from the *Eroica*, etc. The turns in the 10th and 12th bars of the Largo can, obviously, only be executed by quitting the notes of the chord as soon as the turn begins:



The correct use of the pedal will prevent the hearer missing the notes quitted. The execution of the turn in the penultimate bar is as follows:—



I may still mention that neither the first nor the third and fourth movement ought to be begun too fast, in order that in the later Periods in considerably quicker notes, no perceptible change of *tempo* may result. In the "Minore" of the third movement, the melody lies with the thumb of the right hand, and I conceive of it somewhat in the following manner:—

but not:—



Slightly accenting the melody notes, as I have indicated them above, joined with a judicious use of the pedal, will attain the object and produce an original and beautiful effect.

In the "Sonate pathétique" which now follows, we once more meet with a Sonata Op. 13, C minor. in the minor. It is characteristic of

Sonate pathét-

ique. the great classical writers that they strikingly favour the major. Among

the thirty-eight Sonatas which Beet-

hoven has written for the pianoforte alone (including those written in his boyhood), twenty-six are in major, ten in minor. Of his Symphonies, two are written in a minor key, seven in a major key; of his String Quartets, twelve are in major and five in minor. In the whole of Mozart's *Figaro* only one single number (the 35-bar Cavatina of the unfortunate little needle) is exclusively in minor; besides this, only the beginning of the duet, "Crudel! perchè finora," and the Fandango in the Finale of the third Act. Indeed, even in *Don Giovanni* only two independent numbers are in minor.

The "Sonate pathétique" is the only one of Beethoven's to which he himself has given a title, while he neither named the Sonata, Op. 28, "Pastorale," nor the Sonata, Op. 57, "Appassionata." Even here the adjective "pathétique," strictly speaking, only suits the first movement, and especially the Introduction in some ways, perhaps, the Adagio; but the Rondo not at all. As in many other Sonatas, so also in this one, Beethoven introduces the second Subject in minor, but ends the first part in (E $\flat$ ) major. It must not be overlooked that in the Development, also, Bee-

oven turns to good account the motive from the introduction,



hythmically transformed into



In the principal Subject of the "Allegro di molto e con brio," the minims provided with staccato dots are again to be essentially distinguished from the crotchets with dots. It is surprising that at the 41st bar of the Allegro most players put the right hand *over* the left, and then describe a curious arc with that in order to reach small  $b\flat$ , which, notwithstanding, can be most conveniently laid hold of if one puts the left hand under the hollow of the right. In the fourth bar of the Introduction, I recommend that the last thirteen notes be brought in uniform speed over the last quaver-value. It is remarkable how much Beethoven places the minor key in the foreground in this movement; only *one* short Episode enters in E $\flat$  major.

Up to now I have forborene to draw your attention afresh to Beethoven's art in building up his themes and entire movements wonderfully scientifically ("architektonisch"); but in face of the Adagio of this Sonata, I cannot refrain from again recalling it. In the Subject, the highest point,  $b\flat$ , on the fourth quaver of the third bar, catches the eye at once; but now please to follow me on a further excursion through the movement. In the 11th bar, twice-accented  $b\flat$  is by this time the highest note; in the 18th bar, thrice-accented  $c$ ; finally, in the 69th bar, thrice-accented  $f$ ; this is the summit, and now it sinks down again, in the last four bars, to small  $a\flat$ . Thus, in this move-

ment, the highest note only appears once, and that near the end, as a last climax. It is worthy of remark that the opening notes of the Rondo,



coincide with the second Subject of the first movement.



Otherwise, the last movement has but little kinship with the character of the first; scarcely anything "pathetic" is to be traced in it. For the rest, it was this Sonata which was the first of all Beethoven's to attain great popularity. If one considers how susceptible the public is even for *empty* pathos, one can understand that the genuine pathos of the first movement, and the wonderful poetry of the slow movement, threw everybody into raptures, and must have drawn their attention to the youthful hero.

With the Sonata Op. 22, Beethoven again returns to the sunny cheerfulness which Op. 22, B<sub>flat</sub> major, smiled on us from the earlier Sonatas (for instance, Op. 2, Nos. 2 and 3, Op. 7, etc.). He himself writes to the publisher, when forwarding the manuscript:—"Diese Sonate hat sich gewaschen, liebster Herr Bruder!" ("This Sonata is capital, dearest *confrère*!") The employment in the Development of the four bars of the Coda, which are composed exclusively out of the F major scale, is interesting. Further, I might still draw your attention to the passage,





If that fingering is taken which lies nearest, and, therefore, the most usual, as indicated *above* the notes, the passage demands unusual strength in the fourth and fifth fingers; while the fingering *below* makes considerably easier. If one looks upon the Beethoven Sonatas as material for finger-exercises, one may require of pupils the upper fingering. But for this purpose I would rather make use of Clementi's Etude from the "Gradus ad Parnassum," which treats quite the same motive.



Besides this, I should like to recommend to you fingering for some bars in the short Development period of the Rondo, since I do not know whether you use my Edition. I have not found it in any other.



Obviously, the same fingering is available also for the analogous passage following.

The Sonata Op. 26, again belongs to the most popular, and the Funeral March Op. 26, A $\flat$  major. therein contained, especially, has become known to all classes of the people. With respect to the variations which—an exception—form the first movement, I may mention, first of all, that I can myself as little agree with the changes of *tempo* arbitrarily prescribed in nearly all Editions, of which the original Edition contains no trace, as with the customary pauses after the Theme and after each variation. As concerns the changes of *tempo*, first of all, we find them prescribed often enough in Beethoven's Variations, whether the variations form an independent whole, or whether they appear as part of a whole. In support of my assertion, I call attention to the Variations, Op. 34, in which Beethoven six times prescribes a change of *tempo*; to the 33 Variations, Op. 120, in which nearly every variation is marked with a different *tempo*; to the variations with violoncello, on a theme from *Judas Maccabeus*; and to his Op. 66, in which three changes of *tempo* occur. In the Trio Variations, Op. 44, are five different *tempo* indications. In the variations on the Duet from the *Zauberflöte*, at Variation 5, one encounters even the express direction, "Si prende il tempo un poco più vivace"; while in the remainder, change of *tempo* is prescribed three times. Apart from all the cases named, in nearly all pieces in variation form the last variation is found marked with a special *tempo*. I refer for yet further confirmation of my assertion (that Beethoven has never omitted to expressly indicate a desired change of *tempo*), to the variations which are to be found, as part of a whole in the Sonata, Op. 109, and in the Trios, Op. 11 No. 3, and Op. 97. Why should we now suppose that Beethoven has neglected to indicate the *tempi* in the present case, while it is probable that he desired just *these* variations, which are to supply the place of

first movement, strictly in uniform *tempo*? And because perceptible pauses between the theme and the variations, among themselves, likewise disturb the uniformity, I cannot admit these pauses. I could well adduce, in favour of my view, how Beethoven has written the final movement (in variation form) of the Cello Sonata, Op. 96, in such a manner that the dividing of the separate variations from one another could be an outrageous thing. I could adduce still more examples, but I am afraid of boring you, and so believe that I have not merely asserted, but have sought to get out of Beethoven himself what he wanted. *Therefore, let the variations be played without perceptible pauses, and without perceptible changes of tempo.* Certainly the theme ought not to be taken too slow; the *tempo* indications  $\text{♩}=72$  or 76 (as added in some Editions), which then bring the *accelerandos* up to  $\text{♩}=96$ , enjoin, in my opinion, *too* slow a *tempo*. Let the second and the last variation act as standard of measurement for the theme and the remaining variations. That, or all that, I do not mean this movement to be played according to the vibrations of the pendulum, scarcely needs mention. Every intelligent player will let a slight modification enter here and there, and a not quite immediate succession of the fifth to the fourth variation will meet everyone's feeling. On this account specially warned only against "perceptible" changes of *tempo* and "perceptible" pauses, of which one perceives the design. I also warn against conceiving of the second variation in any way in a *bravura* style, which is not at all appropriate.

The Scherzo, as well as the Finale, presents many technical difficulties, while the Funeral March only requires extraordinary carefulness in the *nuances*, fulness of tone (even in *piano*), and a subtle working-out of such contrasts as from the *pp* of the 16th bar to the *fortissimo* of the 19th. It was interesting to me

to find in one of Beethoven's sketch-books the following rough draft of the middle movement in A $\flat$  major which I must write out for you, indeed, from memory but for the correctness of which in the main I believe I can answer.

The image shows three staves of handwritten musical notation on a page. The notation is in A-flat major, indicated by the bass clef and the A-flat key signature. The time signature is 2/4. The top staff begins with a 'c' and contains a series of notes and rests. The middle staff begins with a 'C' and also contains a series of notes and rests. The bottom staff continues the pattern. The notation is sketchy, with some horizontal lines and dots indicating rhythm. The paper is aged and yellowed.



proof how Beethoven was so often not satisfied with his first inspirations, and how, on the other hand, he was able to evolve something important out of the simplest, frequently almost naïve, ideas.

There now follow the two Sonatas, Op. 27, named by p. 27, No. 1, Beethoven "Sonata quasi una Fantasia." By this is sufficiently indicated that they E-flat major. deviate from the usual Sonata form. But both contain two movements (the movement substituted for the Scherzo, and the Finale), which are written strictly in the established form. The form of the first movement of No. 1 is so lucid and clear, that I should consider it rather an affront to you were I to enlarge upon it. On the other hand, I venture to call your special attention to how the entire Andante is so constantly provided with the signs *pp* and *p* that one cannot take too much pains for the most delicate treatment of the movement, and accordingly one should never add the *crescendi* up to a real *forte*, nor take the *sforzandi* harshly and sharply.\* Also the *Allegro molto e vivace* must be played without an accent in the *piano* passages; it should, apart from the *forte* passages, slip past in a shadowy fashion. In the Stuttgart Edition we meet with the very correct observation that the two-bar rhythm in this movement does not have its

\* Herr von Elterlein calls this movement simply "an unsuccessful attempt."

accent in bars one, three, five, etc., but in bars two, four, six, etc.; so that the first bar forms, so to speak, an up-beat, and in  $\frac{6}{4}$  time would read:—



This accent, however, ought obviously to be a very slight one. (This is, therefore, a similar case to the Finale of the Sonata, Op. 14, No. 2). I must still mention about this, that the last of the three notes placed under one slur ought not to be purposely shortened, as if the last note were a quaver, or a crotchet marked with a staccato dot:—



In respect of the last two movements, I mention nothing further than that the cadenza at the close of the last Adagio ought not to be played fast; above all, not begun precipitately. In an Adagio a cadenza should not be played as quickly as in an Allegro; more than that Beethoven has also written it only in semiquavers.

The C $\sharp$  minor Sonata which now follows is far more widely known than its sister. It is called Op. 27, No. 2, the "Moonlight Sonata." I should like to know what the last two movements have to do with moonlight!\* However, that is quite a matter of indifference; the Sonata is simply a wonderfully poetical masterpiece, and it would be as foolish

\* I played this Sonata once at a Court. After finishing it, the Queen stepped up to me, and asked me now to play also the "Moonlight Sonata." Naturally, there remained nothing for me to tell the illustrious lady that the piece just performed had the "Moonlight Sonata", but that the last two movements certainly in no way justified this nickname.

s superfluous did I wish to foist upon it a poetical programme, which it truly is in no need of. About the execution of the first movement, Beethoven himself says all that there is to say, in the words: "Si deve suonare tutto questo pezzo delicatissimamente e senza sordini," and I only add to this that the use of the pedal which Beethoven prescribes by the words "senza sordini" must be a judicious one, inasmuch as one must let down the dampers at every change of harmony. It is very important to lift the fingers which have to play the triplet accompaniment very carefully, immediately after the keys are struck, and especially not to let the thumb remain down. If this be not neglected, and if a not too dragging *tempo* be taken, the melody will detach itself wonderfully from the rest. In choosing the *tempo*, you ought not to look upon the figure of the accompaniment as standard, but exclusively the melody, which, with a too slow *tempo*, may easily become unintelligible. The performance by Liszt of this movement, and of the Allegretto which follows, is to me never to be forgotten, although nearly sixty years lie between. You can gauge from this how great the impression was, although (or perhaps exactly *because*) the rendering was so thoroughly plain and genuine. Just as Beethoven has shunned writing between the Adagio, with its depth of feeling, and the Presto raging along in stormy passion, a Scherzo, but rather a plain tuneful movement which forms a golden bridge from the first to the last movement, so also did Liszt avoid, in the execution, everything that could sound Scherzo-like. He played the movement like a dialogue which begins with a question, avoiding any sharp accent. A highly-gifted performance certainly does not allow of being satisfactorily explained and described, but you will understand me.†

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† Herr von Elterlein is of opinion that this movement is nothing more than a *Minuet* (!) in Mozart's style.

In the Finale it ought not to be overlooked that the *sforzati* in the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th, and 8th bars are placed in the middle of a *piano*, and that the latter must, therefore, always re-enter with the last quaver. The shake in the 16th bar after the first pause has to begin with the principal note, and if the Finale be taken at the correct *tempo*, it cannot embrace more than five notes:—



The small notes in the 5th and 4th bars before the close of the first part, and the analogous chords toward the end of the entire movement, must be played as Beethoven had prescribed arpeggio chords.



The shake in the 14th bar before the close of the movement must be played without a concluding turn, and the little cadenza must be played quietly, for it ushers in the two bars marked "Adagio." The cadenza consists of the so-called harmonic minor scale with the notes of the chord of the diminished seventh scattered between, and, in my opinion, one will best do justice to both factors if one conceives of the vision in the following manner:—



inally, it should not be overlooked that Beethoven, as, in this Sonata, waived all polyphony; it stands, probably, quite alone in this respect.

The Sonata in D major, Op. 28, which now follows, has been given the nickname "Pastorale," with Op. 28, neither more nor less right than similar D major. designations were conferred on some other "Pastorale." sonatas. In any case, there dwells within this sonata a mood so quiet, so tender, so passionless, as in scarcely any other. In the first part of the Allegro only single bars occur marked *forte*, and further, so, Beethoven always returns quickly to *piano* and *pianissimo*. It seems to me to suit this peculiar character of the whole movement if one does not mark the rhythm in the 28th bar too sharply, and if one does not insist upon playing to the first crotchet strictly two quavers, and to the next ones three quavers each; rather, a certain equalization, whereby all eight notes of the right hand sound uniformly quick, is very suitable here. In the 50th bar, I recommend the following fingering for the right hand:—



y which the *d* can be held on as a crotchet, which is impossible with the fingering that the Stuttgart, as also the Steingräber Edition prescribes:—



In the 39th bar before the three bars marked "Adagio," Beethoven has prescribed a sudden *piano* after the

*fortissimo*, which must certainly not be overlooked. The Stuttgart Edition, indeed, considers this *piano* an error, laying stress on it in a special remark; as concerns which, however, I can inform you that I have carefully revised my Edition after Beethoven's autograph, and that this *piano* is as authentic as the *sforzati* following thereupon. It is true, the latter ought not to be taken here so sharply as was necessary before in the middle of the *fortissimo*. The Steingräber Edition (in other respects very estimable), on the other hand, prescribes at the beginning of the second parties from bar 4 to 5,



which are not authentic.

The Andante gives occasion for only a few observations. Bars 7 and 8 of the second part ought certainly not to be hurried, after the reprehensible manner of many amateurs. As little should the Episod in major be taken at all faster, and one must be very careful to invest it, by the mode of performance, with a somewhat scherzo-like character; only grace and sweetness ought to be opposed to the seriousness of the principal motive. In the penultimate bar, some Edition prescribe a  $b\sharp$  in the turn: that is wrong, Beethoven has expressly prescribed  $\tilde{b}$ . In the Trio of the Scherzo the persistent return of the following motive is peculiari-



which stands a small dose of humour in performance. In the final movement I am always compelled to think of distant bells, of rustling woods, and such-like; another will, with equal authority, hear somethin-

uite different; but, in any case, he is wrong who only recognises arpeggio chords, in the semiquavers from the 17th bar onward. The hidden melody *f*, *d*, *c*, *b*, *a*, etc., must be delicately indicated and the two hands must melt entirely into one; for which it is also to be recommended that one play something like this:—



In some Editions, the tie between the two *e*'s from the 9th to the 30th bar is wanting, and later on between the two *a*'s, in the parallel passage: it is to be found in the Beethoven autograph. The three-part Episode in G-major, must be played quite uniformly *pianissimo* up to the *crescendo*, prescribed after twelve bars; but then the bass must resound in the *fortissimo* like the one of an organ. For the following figure, I recommend instead of the generally-prescribed upper fingering, the lower:—



The bass notes of the two final chords sound *a*, *d*, and so say I also for to-day, dear Friend: *Ade!* (*Adieu.*)

Yours, C. R.

Leipzig, May 17, 1895.

## VIII.

You will remember, my dear lady, that in very many of his Sonatas Beethoven lets the second Op. 31, No. 1, Subject appear at first in the minor key, G major, and only turns to the major later on. In the Sonata, Op. 31, No. 1, in G major, you will find it reversed: first it is heard in B major, then in B minor. The close of the first part on the third, instead of the fifth, is also somewhat unusual. As I know of nothing special to tell you about the means for a correct conception of the first movement, without repeating what has been said before, I will at least not withhold from you a little anecdote relating to it which Ferdinand Ries narrates in the following words: "When the proofs arrived, I found Beethoven writing 'Play the sonata once through', said he to me, while he remained seated at the desk. There were uncommonly many mistakes in it, through which Beethoven already became impatient. At the close of the first Allegro in the Sonata in G major, however, Nägeli had even composed and inserted four bars, viz. after the fourth bar from the last pause, the following: —

As I played this, Beethoven sprang up in a rage, came running up, and half pushed me from the piano, crying, 'Where on earth is that?' His astonishment and anger can be imagined when he saw it printed thus. I received the order to make a list of all mistakes and to send the Sonatas immediately to Simrock, Bonn, who was to re-engrave them, and to affix '*Edition très correcte*.' The publisher Nägeli, in Zürich,

who had had the incredible effrontery to compose and insert four bars of inexpressible insipidity into Beethoven's Sonata, is the same to whom we owe the well-known song, "Freut euch des Lebens," but at the same time, also, an expression of opinion about Mozart's so-called final Fugue in the C major (Jupiter) Symphony, which so excited me when I once read it, in my boyhood, that I hurled the book into the furthest corner of the room. The room, it is true, was very small!

It should not be overlooked that in this movement, first and foremost, we meet with a broadly carried out ending, such as is not seldom found in Beethoven's orchestral works. The thirty bars after the pause press forward persistently to the close, with *alternate chords exclusively on dominant and tonic*, while Beethoven has hitherto wound up mostly in the shortest manner. In the two following movements, also, we find very broad conclusions.

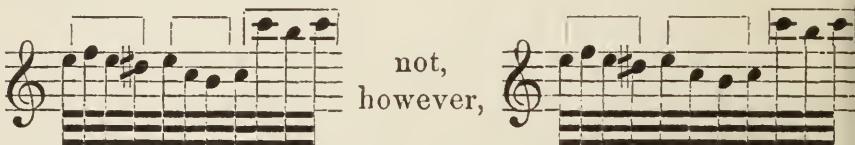
The Subject of the Adagio which follows strikingly reminds one, in outline, of Haydn's Aria from the *Creation*, "*In native worth.*" —

The image shows a musical score with two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Haydn.' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Beethoven.'. Both staves begin with a treble clef. The Haydn staff has a 'C' key signature. The Beethoven staff has a '9' over '8' key signature, indicating a change in time signature. The music consists of several measures. In the Beethoven staff, there is a dynamic marking 'tr' (trill) above the staff. The music features various note values including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The Beethoven staff also includes a section with a bass clef and a 'B' key signature.

and the rising up to *a*, later on, is common to both themes. Do not take me, however, for a reminiscence-

hunter, on account of this comparison! I very well know that Beethoven had no need to borrow from Haydn, but I consider it interesting to trace out the treatment of such masters.

What I have said before about the manner and method of playing cadenzas in slow movements, I recall to you here: begin quietly, and gradually quicken speed! In the 25th bar before the end, there are three groups with eleven demisemiquavers. It is most desirable, naturally, that each eleven notes be played quite uniformly; but if you do not succeed in this, divide as follows:—



Such a group should never be played slower towards the end. The last movement is often taken too fast, in spite of the indication *Allegretto*; the frequently occurring quaver triplets also impose a moderate *tempo*. On the other hand, the few bars marked *Adagio* should on no account be taken very slow; because by that the fluency of the whole suffers, and, in connection therewith, is rendered difficult for the hearer to understand.

Lovely and refreshing even as is this Sonata, it is, in my opinion, far outshone by the following Op. 31, No. 2. one in D minor. What use Beethoven makes of the simplest of all motives—the chord—



with which he begins the first movement! It returns some twenty times. Nottebohm tells us that Beethoven has sketched the whole of the first movement in scanty outline on one small page. It is true, it is formed a

f from a mould. It is remarkable that Beethoven does not once introduce the major key in this whole movement; indeed, he even produces only once a major tonic triad! On the other hand, in the second movement you will find only thrice a minor triad, each of one crotchet duration, whilst all the rest is radiant in brightest major. And now the third movement? There are only eighteen bars which belong to a major key: in the first part, seven bars in C major (from bar 35-41), and in the second part, the charming eleven-bar Episode in B $\flat$  major, which, indeed, shines forth like a glimpse of sunshine. I wonder if this be accidental? I believe not!

And now for a few details. The first chord should not be broadly spread. *The arpeggio sign, generally, has always only the signification that the chord in question is not to be struck Quite precisely together;* if the composer really desires it broadly spread, he writes it differently. Whether, from the 21st bar on, the principal motive of the bass, as well as the motive placed against it in the melody, is played with the left hand, or whether the latter is played with the right hand, I consider a matter of indifference. In either way, the two motives can be detached from one another. The relationship between a Period from Mozart's C minor Concerto and the following from this movement, is interesting:—

Mozart.

Beethoven.



The way in which Beethoven has written the arpeggios at the beginning of the second part, confirms my view given above. Here they must be more broadly separated one from another, and a division between the two hands in such a way that the left hand takes the minim every time, is much to be recommended. The second of the two recitative-like passages, which are marked "Largo," is generally found written in the following way:—



while in the oldest standard edition it is:—



a reading to which, also, the preference is to be unconditionally given. At both passages, the authentic Beethoven direction "*con espressione e semplice*," should not be overlooked. The words *con espressione e semplice* characterize, upon the whole, in the shortest and most pregnant fashion, the essence of good and noble execution, and nowadays one might extremely frequently call out to the interpreters, be they singers, or players, or conductors, "*E semplice!*" Where has the *semplice* got to? The four chords after the second Largo can scarcely be played soft enough while the analogous

hords in the 9th and 10th bars of the Allegro can scarcely be sounded too forcibly.

In the Adagio, the turn in the 10th bar is to be performed in the following manner:—



nd, obviously, this kind of execution serves for all analogous cases, in the 12th and 14th bars, etc.; while in the 20th bar, the execution is the following:—



From the 23rd bar onwards, the crossing of the left hand over the right required by Beethoven, is uncomfortable, and I consider the manner of performance which I have proposed in my Edition no unlawful arbitrary proceeding, but probably a great facilitation. In the 10th bar before the end, the small notes ought not to be played too fast, since this would be contrary to the character of the movement.

In the last movement, the indication “Allegretto” is to be carefully observed; too quick a *tempo* readily imparts an étude-like character which the composer can never have intended. A pianoforte piece by Beethoven, which he wrote “for Elise” (“Für Elise”), on the 7th April, 1810, and which contains the following notice, very much akin to the *Finale* of the D minor Sonata—



is marked with the *tempo* indication "Poco moto," and this confirms my view. For the rest, we find here once more an example of Beethoven's fondness for writing down his ideas in short kinds of time, while the accent ought not to fall accordingly. If one were to give the same accent to the first quaver of each bar, the rapid flight of the movement would be entirely lost; indeed, at the beginning I would even reduce every four bars to one group, and only in the first and fifth bar allow a delicate emphasis to fall to the share of the first quaver. Throughout the *perpetuum mobile* of this movement (in which the flow of semi-quavers is scarcely ever interrupted) runs a hidden thread of melody, which the player ought not to overlook if he wants to bring out the good points of the movement correctly.

I will still mention that in this Sonata two cases occur in which Beethoven remodels the parallel passage on account of the deficient compass of the keyboard, but each time in such a way that a levelling of it would crush a special beauty. They are the following passages: in the first movement, 40 bars before the end (opposed to the parallel passage in the first part), and in the Finale, in the 93rd bar before the end of the entire Sonata (opposed to the corresponding passage in the first part of this movement). Both are a warning not to be too ready with the levelling of parallel passages. In addition to this, one often finds in Beethoven that also without the reason of the deficient keyboard he did not in parallel passages strictly copy the earlier one. I only mention amongst others, the second Subject in the first movement of the great B $\flat$  major Trio, Op. 97. Also in the Sonat-

Op. 31, No. 3, in E $\flat$  major which now follows, you will

find a passage which Beethoven brings to a specially beautiful climax (an extension by two bars), by means of the transformation imposed in respect of the keyboard. Who would venture to suppress

hese two bars out of a desire for levelling! You will easily discover the passage in question.

Up to now I have abstained from pointing out to you ever anew the highly interesting thematical working, specially in the first movements of the Beethoven Sonatas; but in the present one I cannot forbear drawing your attention to the fact that the first motive,



with all its transformations,



occurs, I should say, about a hundred times. The questioning, anticipating, preluding, or whatever you like to call it, which lies in the first six bars, must, as a matter of course, be given characteristic expression, and the strictest observation of the Beethoven directions, *p.*, *ritard.*, *cresc.*, a fine mezzo-staccato of the three chords in the 3rd and 5th bars, will fully suffice to meet Beethoven's intentions. Great care should be taken that in the following figure—



a weak accent comes on the first note only. I best attain a soft accent of this kind by raising the hand some  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and only allowing the slight weight of the same to operate in falling, without letting the finger strike independently. It is, however, perhaps a peculiarity which does not suit others, and which I will

therefore not force upon your pupils. In bar 44 the genuine Beethoven prescription, in respect of the dynamics, is the following:—



but the right hand should not enter already *forte*, as prescribed by some editions. In bar 53, a too scrupulous division of four, five, and twelve notes each to a crotchet will not have a good effect, and a certain *laissez aller* would be quite suitable here. The entire passage of four bars forms, indeed, altogether only a transition group, and on this account can be more elastically treated than a fixed melody or passage group.

In the Scherzo, the indication *Allegretto vivace* ought not to mislead you into too quick a *tempo*. The frequently occurring demisemiquavers, especially when they appear in thirds in the left hand against the semiquavers in the right hand, point to the correct *tempo*. For the rest, the movement should not be set about in too Scherzo-like a fashion; there is something peculiarly meditative pervading it; indeed, from the last quaver of the ninth bar up to the pause, it is as if the master deliberated on what now follows. It must be played *quasi parlando* throughout, — as marked, — *pianissimo*, and without any *nuances*, as far as the *tempo*. About the Minuet there is nothing further to say than that in the Trio (on which Saint-Saëns has written the interesting Variations for two pianos) no the slightest hastening of the time should enter —

nannerism to which amateurs are much addicted as soon as they have suddenly to play slower note-values. May you live as cheerfully and happily as the Finale which follows breathes cheerfulness and happiness! If one can overcome it technically, it plays "of itself," to make use of a vulgar expression.—

Yours, C. R.

Leipzig, June 16th, 1895.

## IX.

In your last letter, dear friend, you ask whether it is purely accidental that up to now I have never recommended to you a change of *tempo*, a *ritardando*, or *stringendo*, or the like, in any one of the Beethoven Sonatas under discussion; or whether I require one pace strictly adhered to? Recently, you had observed at a performance of Beethoven's C minor Symphony various changes of *tempo*, and in the Finale a colossal *ritardando* which is not prescribed.

It is *not* accidental, my dear lady! Not once, but a hundred times, have I observed that directions of the kind always lead to exaggeration, whilst the sensitive interpreter will introduce those small modifications which might be desirable, if nothing at all is prescribed. It is, however, still better if the less talented player entirely omit such *nuances* than if he overstep the mark. Obviously, there are works which can only be made of special account by a certain "staging," but to these, truly, Beethoven's works do not belong! When Beethoven—as, for example, in the so-called Waldstein Sonata, now to be discussed—prepares the second Subject by a twelve-bar Period on the dominant, he has truly achieved all that is necessary in a purely musical manner, in order to make the hearer thirst for the second Subject, which at last enters; and any perceptible *ritardando* would be a pleonasm. The same

sort of Period in the Finale of the C minor Symphony likewise has an extension of twelve bars. It is on all occasions interesting to observe what broad introductions Beethoven makes use of in his larger works, in order to usher in a new Subject; relatively, also, in order to bring in again a former Subject. In the Finale of the C major Sonata, Op. 2, by way of example, such a passage comprises 17 bars; in the B<sub>2</sub> major Symphony, 27; in the Waldstein Sonata, 20. What should and would a *ritardando* do there? But how one can slacken the second Subject in the C minor Symphony is incomprehensible to me, as Beethoven unites the principal motive with it simultaneously!

I cannot refrain from repeating to you here a thesis from my small brochure, "Winke und Rathschläge für musikalische Jugend," which runs:— "When Mozart says, 'The most indispensable, hardest, and principal thing in music is the *tempo*'; when he prides himself 'that he always keeps accurate time'; when Beethoven, as Ferdinand Ries relates, always played in time; when Schumann, in his Rules for home and life, teaches, 'Play in time! The playing of some *virtuosi* is like the gait of a drunken man. Take no such for a model!'; when Hummel says, 'The player must strictly observe the time throughout the entire piece; the accompanists should not for a moment be led astray by the player about the prevailing *tempo*, but he must execute his piece so correctly and according to rule that they can accompany him without fear and not be obliged to hearken at almost every bar for a deviation from the time. On this account the player is often himself in fault if he is badly accompanied even by a good orchestra'; when, finally, Chopin writes 'The left hand should be like a Capellmeister; not for one moment ought it to be uncertain and hesitating—these five are no mean authorities who require 'playing in time,' and one must feel very much surprised that, notwithstanding, it is so much sinned

against.”\* So long as I have any breath left, I shall not tire of denouncing the nuisance which is evermore gaining ground, of fluctuations of *tempo* in classical works, even if I were to be stoned for it! Already, nowadays, one no longer listens to a classical symphony in order to enjoy the work, but to observe in it what licences this or that conductor admits; and if it is now quite different from how one has always heard it, then one hails it with joy and cries, “He understands it; one does not recognize the work again at all.” The object is attained, for the conductor has produced an effect; it does not, indeed, depend any more upon the work. And even the better class of critics seem nowadays to have become indifferent to such inartistic runnings after effect, or shrink from censuring them. In the above-named pamphlet, I mention that Beethoven’s contemporary, Ritter Ignaz von Seyfried, relates how the former prepared for the Vienna Schuppanzigh String Quartet his works of that kind “extremely exactly (haarscharf genau), as he wanted to have them *thus* and by no means otherwise” practised. Thus Beethoven would not hear of any choice on the part of the performers! And that quite rightly!

But now to come to the point—*i.e.* to the Sonata, Op. 53, C major. I will, however, be brief, for whoever has reached this Sonata ought to stand fairly on his own feet; nevertheless, here Waldstein and there a bit of good advice, a little historical information or the like, may be welcome to everyone. Properly speaking, the time-signature of the first movement should have been marked, probably, as *Alla Breve* ( $\frac{2}{2}$  time), not as  $\frac{4}{4}$ . The second Subject, in E major, proves this most manifestly. At its repetition one often hears the thumb of the

\* Carl Mikuli, a pupil of Chopin, writes moreover:— “In keeping time Chopin was inexorable, and it will surprise many to learn that with him the metronome did not come off the piano.

right hand too prominent, while, nevertheless, that of the left hand has to play the melody.

The accident of Beethoven's having written the same Subject on the upper staff alone when it appears in the second part, in C major, is the cause that in the engraved editions the distribution of parts has come out wrong. It ought to be played by the left hand only, as follows:

R. H.

L. H.

while the small four notes, *f*, *e*, *d*, *c*, must be taken over by the right hand. Four bars later, Beethoven also has written it in this way. Bülow has given many very acute musical hints in the Cotta Edition to which I gladly draw your attention; nevertheless I cannot declare—even apart from the modifications of *tempo* prescribed by him—that I agree with all. When *e.g.*, Bülow, sixteen bars before the conclusion of the first part, wants the shake begun with the auxiliary note, and at the same time indicates semiquaver rate as sufficient, the following unlovely harmony ensues

I consider it necessary to play the shake quicker, and to begin it with *D* $\sharp$ . In like manner, I cannot call good Bülow's desire to prolong the pauses which occur in this movement for exactly two bars' duration. Pauses lie outside metre, and the sustaining of them must make the hearer feel that he no longer remains within the jurisdiction of the bar. The passages in the second part, on occasion of which Bülow gives that direction, run as follows:



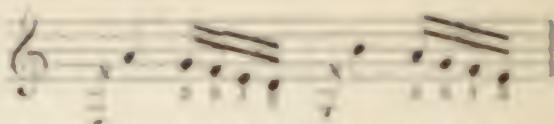
and induce me to give you the rule that *unexpected note-progressions should never be played quite like the entirely plain, previously-expected note-progression must be.* In the beginning of the Sonata, bars 12 and 13, it reads:



The latter *g* is, as dominant from *c*, the note taken for granted by every unprejudiced person, and must accordingly be played quite naturally; while the *ab*, as something quite unexpected by the hearer, must also be insinuated as such—thus in this case, perhaps, by a scarcely perceptible rest before it, and a striking *piano* or *pianissimo*. In the 31st bar before the close of the Sonata:



Bülow prescribes the lower fingering, whereby the little finger is always expected to make a skip of a fifth in the quickest *tempo*; while others write the upper fingering, which, however, leads to a similar inconvenience for the thumb. In order to avoid the over-hastening of the four semiquavers infallibly induced by both fingerings, I play as follows:



which will undoubtedly prove practical.

The two scales written in small notes, bars 20 and 21 before the end, ought not to be played too fast with regard to the quiet Subject following, in which I, by the way, cannot call the inclusion of the Contra-E and -F in the second bar, prescribed also by Beethoven, good.



because the big tree of these contraries sounds too foreign to this Sonata. It interesting to know that Beethoven originally wrote a middle movement for this Sonata other than that now existing headed "Introduction." The Andante in F major, I (which is also known under the title "Andante favorit"), was originally composed for this Sonata; but Beethoven later on judged it too effusive, and wrote the short, wonderfully beautiful Introduction, which, with the exception of the few bars 19-21, must be played as if groping and guessing. The last movement also was originally planned quite differently. The first sketch for it runs thus:





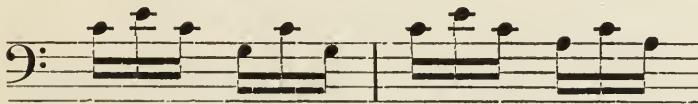
The *tempo* indication of the Finale reads, “*allegretto moderato*,” which is to be laid well to heart. As Beethoven, in the course of the movement, raises the motive, in itself so insignificant,



to greater importance, while near the close of the C minor Episode he brings it in, in the left hand, fourteen times in direct succession, and a few bars later on again; further, immediately before the *Prestissimo*, and finally, once more in the latter itself (at the second *fortissimo* on  $a\flat$ ), one must, at the very outset, seek to give these two notes a certain significance, in spite of the prescribed *pianissimo*. For the rest, it cannot be played too simply. The difficult semiquaver figure



was originally



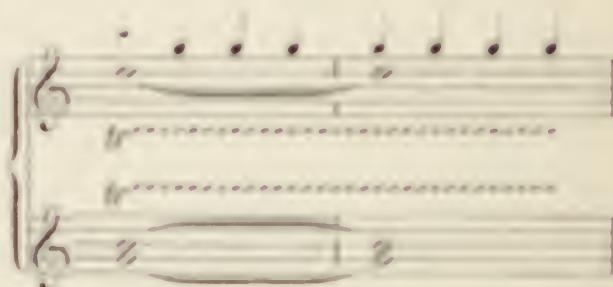
As many an one may regret that Beethoven did not thus retain it! About the manner of playing the Subject combined with the shake, later on, pretty well every

Edition, probably, gives directions. The rule is, that the upper note of the shake is omitted as soon as a note of the melody has to sound, thus:

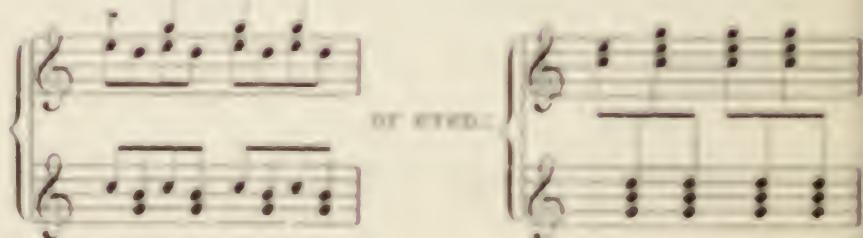
ad 8.



Directions are likewise to be found nearly everywhere for replacing the octave glissandos in the last movement (which are scarcely practicable on modern instruments). In bar 37 before the end is the following passage:—



which Hollow recommends to be played in the following manner:—

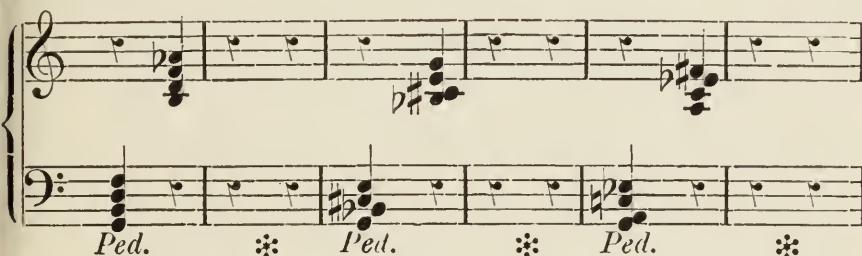


The latter way would appear to me too strange. I myself play thus:

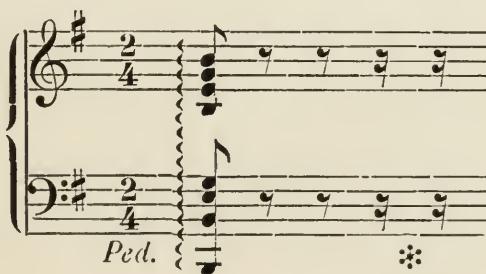


and you must take your choice.

I may mention still, that Beethoven wrote from the ninth bar before the Prestissimo in the following manner:



No one, however, seems to have understood for what reason Beethoven cut up the bar rest into two crotchet rests. "Und ist doch so kinderleicht" ("And yet it is so childishly easy"), as it says in Wilhelm Müller's "Abendreih'n." That is to say, it would have been impossible to indicate in any other way the exact letting down of the dampers with the entry of the second crotchet. An analogous case is in the second movement of his G major Concerto, where he has cut up a quaver rest into two semiquaver rests:



And with this chord of Six-four do I take leave of you to-day, although it is really very unmusical!

Yours ever, C. R.

Leipzig, July, 1895.

x.

I am very glad, my dear lady, that my five authorities for "playing well in time"—Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Hummel, and Chopin—have so impressed you; but nevertheless, a slight doubt is apparent through your question. How it was possible that, in spite of this, the *tempo rubato* has so much gained ground nowadays, with players as well as conductors? To which I can only answer, as Moritz Hauptmann once replied to a similar question, with the words:—"Yes, you see, health is not infectious; it is disease which are infectious!" If I recollect aright, I have already mentioned to you once before that a mathematically uniform *tempo* throughout an entire Sonata-movement is as insipid as unlovely. But there is a vast difference between the obtrusive changes of *tempo* which those masters condemn, and an imperceptible introduction of a faster or slower time, such as every sensitive artist will make a practice of, at the proper place. Carl Maria von Weber says in his preface to "Euryanthe":—"Of the two remaining, the *accelerando* as well as the *ritardando* ought never to produce a feeling of jerkiness or forcing," and that is what I mean. And yet another saying, of E. T. A. Hoffmann, is appropriate here; it runs: "The genuine artist lives only in the work which he has conceived in the spirit of the master, and now executes. He desists to assert his personality in any way."

The Sonata Op. 54, in F major, belongs to those Op. 54. seldom played. It consists of only two F major. movements, and is, up to a certain point, without the ingratiating poetry which is

nostly to be found in the slow movements, or at least in the second Subject of the "corner" movements. In the first movement, "In tempo d'un Menuetto," an energetic, imitative motive is opposed to the pleasant principal Subject; but the strange thing is that the close of a first part, as well any development, is wanting, and the steady continuance in the prevailing key of F major, from the return of the principal Subject to the end of the movement (that is throughout fully 85 bars), and even with eight Perfect Closes, is likewise peculiar! Bülow censures a conjectured misprint in the 49th bar, and wants, instead of the original reading:



a triplet of Sixths on the second crotchet,



an alteration to which one very readily agrees. The *tempo* is obviously a measured one. The Finale is a complete *perpetuum mobile*, for the flow of semiquavers is not interrupted in a single bar. It reminds one of the Finale of the A-flat major Sonata, Op. 26, not only on account of the mobility peculiar to both movements, but also on account of the very similar figures:

Op. 54.

A musical score from Op. 54, Finale, in G clef, B-flat key signature, and common time. The score consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff has a bracket above it indicating a common measure. The bass staff has a bass clef and a B-flat key signature. Both staves feature continuous semiquaver figures.

Op. 26.

Herr von Elterlein says of this movement, briefly and concisely, "Leere, Bedeutungslosigkeit ist sein Charakter" (87). "Its character is emptiness and insignificance."

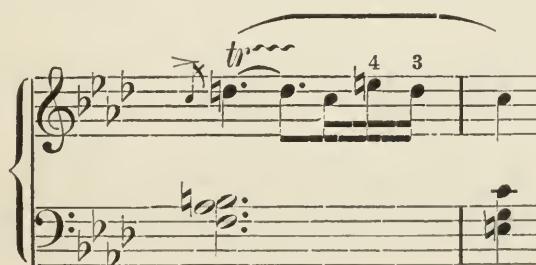
The Sonata in F minor which now follows has been given the nickname "Appassionata," and, if one puts out of the question the middle movement, which shows no trace of passionateness, it is indeed suitable. For a long time this Sonata, as also the Waldstein Sonata, was chosen by preference for public performance, until later on there was a rush upon the last five, because the two above-named were the "played out." Thus it happened that one got to hear the Sonata, Op. 13, in C minor, five times within a few months in Leipzig! Thus also may it have come about that in my long life I have heard, for example, Schubert's *Standchen*, "Leise fließen meine Lieder,"<sup>15</sup> only once single time in public, whilst I constantly found on the programme those "seldom or never heard." Pardon me for again digressing. But I think you also, must be at times weary of the dry style. And dry all written explanations of musical works must be, if the writer may not cross the labyrinth of poetical suppositions, which, it is true, read very well, but for all that do not lead the player one hair's breadth nearer a right understanding. If, however, as I hope, you have now accustomed yourself to trace out in each movement the structure and the thematical working, the organic growth of the whole, my dull unburdenings have fully attained their object. And I will henceforth, as I have promised already once, express myself briefly, and only in part

mention some general rules, and in part not withhold from you my—for the rest, humble—opinion in doubtful cases, and in special cases give you a few practical rules.

Beginning with the shake which appears for the first time in the third bar, I may mention with regard to it, that *the appoggiatura note or notes which a composer prefixes to the shake, ought never to be taken from the preceding, but always from the succeeding, note.* Accordingly, in this case the *c* coincides precisely with the chord in the bass, and receives a slight accent. Bülow represents the execution in the following way:—



and if this figure is to be written out in full, Bülow's notation may be the best; but it is always a precarious thing to write out such ornaments in full, and still more so to perform them exactly literally. A genuine shake, moreover, sounds quite different from such a semiquaver figure; therefore I would prefer to write the figure in the following manner:—

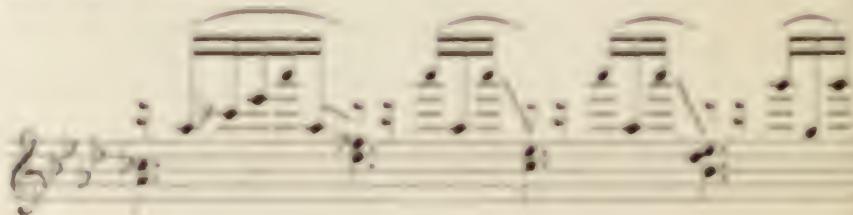


or better still:



There is a bad custom which engravers consistently follow, of putting the small notes prematurely, at a place which does not belong to them. On the part of composers, publishers and proof-readers, it should be strictly insisted on that this does not happen any more; for there are proportionately few who know the rule which below, in the present case, expresses in the following words:—“*As this rule holds good for all instruments: Without Exception the first three notes must fall precisely on the beat in question.*” After the first pause, and at the analogous bars, the accent must be given alternately by the left and right hand, so that four triple rhythms, and not about six (rare cases), are heard. It is a very usual facilitation to take the first chord in the fourth bar after the pause, with the left hand, to which there cannot be the slightest objection.

Shortly before the end of the first part (in A<sub>9</sub> minor), ten bars before the rounding off of the original key-signature, is a passage which is often wrongly interpreted, since the semiquavers of the right hand are played too isolated. They must, on the contrary, be joined on as closely as possible to the succeeding chords of the left hand:—



A similar passage is to be found in the C minor Trio from Op. 1, by Beethoven.



In the shakes which begin with the change of signature, a facilitation, certainly desired by many, is ensured if the lower note of the right hand ( $e\sharp$ , later on  $d\sharp$ ) be taken over by the thumb of the left hand. When, after the Development section, Beethoven returns to the commencement, and requires the repetition of Great C and  $D\flat$ , throughout sixteen bars, everyone will perceive how difficult it is to meet his requirement in *pianissimo*. This is because the hammer-heads in this region are very large and, accordingly, heavy, and thus I have personally, found it very good to make use of two fingers (the 3rd and 4th) simultaneously for striking. It is, in any case, a harmless little "household remedy!" Bülow took the thumb for this passage, as is seen from his editions.

From the 36th bar before the Più Allegro, there is an accompanying semiquaver figure in the right hand, which the Beethoven manuscript leaves an open question. I cannot decide for Bülow's reading, which alternates between

A musical score for piano featuring two staves. The upper staff shows a series of eighth-note patterns with grace notes. The lower staff shows a series of eighth-note patterns with grace notes. The text 'and' is placed between the two staves, indicating a choice between the two readings.

first, because the latter figuration appears to me somewhat trivial and paltry, and further, because Bölow has inserted an arbitrary alteration in the bar in which this figuration appears for the first time, and which reads, quite unquestionably, as follows:—



In the so-called "Hammer-Clavier" Sonata, Op. 106, we shall see that Bölow is at times radically mistaken in his premises. He there reproaches the "Beethoven improvers" who had, with naturally correct feeling, corrected an obvious slip, with having degraded enharmonic ingenuity to a chromatic triviality; and—behold!—Nottetabak, later on, proved to demonstration that Beethoven himself perpetrated this "triviality," and that the editors were quite in the right. We shall return to it again at the proper place.

With regard to the four bars marked *ritardando* and *Adagio*, immediately before the *Piu Allegro*, there is to be observed, (1), that the *tempo Piu* is not to be taken literally, because the sounding on of  $\text{d}^{\#}$  and  $\text{c}$  together can never produce a pastoral, but solely an unlovely, effect, (2), that the *ritardando* must be made more effective, in so far as one gradually prolongs the rests between the motives more and more a trifle—the motive itself, however, not too much slackened—by which means its impressive rhythm never gets lost, even in the *Adagio*. The variations which now follow must, as a matter of course, be played through out in the same *tempo*, almost uniformly *piano*, and with a certain pious reserve. One must quite forget the *pianissi*, so that neither can the second variation acquire a glimmering of *Étude*-style, nor the last, of bravura. That the left hand must often be made prominent by intelligent expression, I am almost ashamed

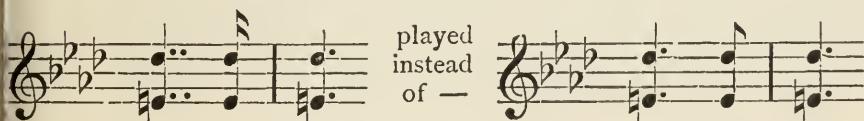
to still observe to you. I have already mentioned in my former letters, that arpeggio chords ought never to be too slowly broken. The three bars of transition to the Finale corroborate this, for the melody therein is:—



and were the chord at the pause broken slowly, the two notes,  $a\flat$  and  $d\flat$ , which belong together, would be too widely separated from one another. Therefore, *not* something like this:



At the beginning of the Finale one often hears—



and I beg you not be offended if I warn you against such inaccuracy. In the warmth of feeling it may well happen that one does not attach the necessary importance to such instructions. For the principal motive, Bülow recommends a fingering which he owed to the late Franz Kroll of Berlin. It is indeed, in my opinion also, the best of all the three fingerings which one finds prescribed, and I advise you, consequently, to let it be used:

F. Kroh.

In the 18th and 20th bars after the first sign in repeat, is a very difficult passage, for which Baloy recommends the fingering:

which, however, I cannot recognize as a *facilitation* if one does not want to entrust to the pedal the hold ing and continuance of sound of the upper by, for crotchet duration (which I consider legitimate and preferable to be recommended), the following way:-

might probably be worth a trial.

And now good luck to the study of this tone poem, which, to be sure, requires by rights an artist who has no further need of the advice of others! But certainly those may also venture on the work with honest industry and serious study, who gladly accept some hints, even from

Yours faithfully, C. R.  
Interlaken, August 1, 1902.

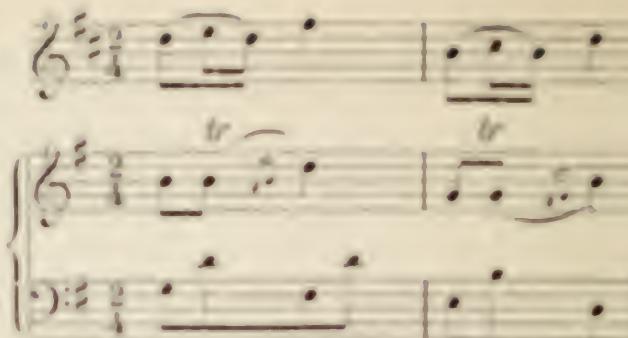
## XI.

Dearest Lady,—If the two Sonatas now following, Op. 78 and Op. 79, are strikingly less Op. 78, F $\sharp$  major. played than all the others, even the greatest admirer of Beethoven—and among these I may also count myself—will be obliged to confess, if he is quite candid, that the reason is probably to be looked for in the works themselves. Would one find fault with a Beethoven, one should at least do so on one's knees, and I should have been ready to throw myself at once on my knees supposing that I had indeed wished to blame or find fault with the works; but I do not dream of such a thing. On the contrary, I acknowledge that the infinite fervour ("Innigkeit") of the introductory Adagio, and the unutterable loveliness of the principal Subject, directly moves me; but, nevertheless, I understand very well that this Sonata has never become popular. And now hurl an anathema at me! But at the same time you may rely upon it that I play it to myself, quite alone within my four walls, with special preference. This F $\sharp$  major Sonata is just a quite confidential piece ("ein ganz intimes Musikstück") which, so far as my experience goes, before an audience does not produce the effect which nearly all the others Op. 79, G major. do. I am certainly cooler towards the G major Sonata, Op. 79; I want to mention, however, that the Subject of the final movement has already been heard in the "Ritter Ballet" (which Beethoven composed at Bonn), and that the germ is probably to be sought for in the Mozart Sonata for pianoforte and violin (Köchel, 379):

Beethoven  
Op. 79.

Beethoven  
Kritik-Bullet

Mozart  
Sonata for  
Pianoforte  
and Violin.  
(Kochel 379)



With the Sonata, Op. 81, which appeared under the title "Sonate caractéristique: Les adieux, l'absence et le retour," Beethoven again created a work of art so finished a form, and such profound and glowing invention, as is permitted to only a few of the elect to create. It is the sole Sonata of the master to which he has subjoined a so-called programme. This programme, however, is such as leaves the hearer plenty of scope for his own interpretation, and, on the other hand, the work is so disposed that one would have the most unreduced artistic enjoyment, even though the master had not given any indication of what was in his mind. Apart from this Sonata, Beethoven has added some indications only to his Pastoral Symphony and his Rondo, Op. 129, "Die Wuti über den verlorenen Groschen" ("Rage over the lost coin"), which have procured for them the name of programme music. In the Rondo a humorous concert is treated of, and no rational being will be able to deny that there are a number of other superscriptions for this humoresque which would suit its character quite as well as the present one. No body will wish to assert that anyone at all would be in a position to express in notes whether a lost coin, or pin, or shovelful is treated of. Ideas and events music can absolutely not express, but certainly moods and states of mind in such wonderfully manifold ways that E. T. A. Hoffmann is able to say with full justice, "Where

language ends, music begins." Beethoven has added a special remark to the Pastoral Symphony, "Mehr Ausdruck der Empfindungen als Malerei" ("More an expression of the emotions than portraiture"), and Wasielewski is perfectly right when he says, in his Beethoven biography: "This class of composition (programme music) has danger concealed in it, in so far as it quite easily leads astray to a coarse realism which can bring no gain to the art, because it divests it of its ideal destiny. Beethoven has avoided these dangers with the most delicate, most artistic tact. His Pastoral Symphony observes a limit by which the conditions of a musical work of art are fully preserved." Neither the portrayal of the "Awakening of cheerful feelings on arriving in the country," nor of a "Scene at the brook," nor of the merry gathering of the country folk, of the storm, and of the "Happy and thankful feelings after the storm", can hinder the composer from doing justice to the form indispensable to a musical work of art; while the depicting of an *incident* is impossible, for the simple reason that the return of Subjects, Periods, and entire movements, already in existence earlier, is as essential in the musical work of art as is, in the work of the architect, the recurrence of his motive and the exact repetition of entire parts. The portrayal of a progressive action, however, brooks no repetition; in that case a person must be as artful as that symphony composer who took part in a competition in which I had the honour to officiate as judge. He had subjoined an extensive programme to the whole of his symphony. In the third movement, a kind of minuet, he depicted "how princes enslave the people;" in the trio, how these rebel; and then it read: "But, notwithstanding, everything remains as of old; therefore the minuet *da capo*." To what whimsicalities the composer comes if he mistakes the mission, the means, and the strength of his art, the following, which I once experienced, is also a proof. As a very

young man, I visited the organist N. N., in —, who played to me a pianoforte concerto which he had written in grief about the death of his brother. The cause in this grief it had become more than ever clear to him that the earth is a vale of tears ("ein Jammers-  
thal!") he began the concerto with — the frivolous Drinking Song of Caspar, "Hier im irdschen Jammerthal"; and penetrated by the knowledge that in such a sorrowful mood one sees "everything reversed," even that which in ordinary life affords one the greatest pleasure — in, perchance, wine — he soon afterwards introduced Mozart's "Vivat Bacchus, Bacchus lebe," which piece, however, he had looked at upside down! He placed the score wrong side up, and lo and behold! Mozart's melody now read:



Pardon this little digression; I do not want by it to spoil your pleasure in the *Flora*記事, *Kinder-szenes*, etc., by Schumann, who has been by no means sparing with headings. But, on the one hand, he himself writes: "I gave the pieces headings lately *us*," and on the other hand, we must acknowledge that by these he, for the most part, only indicates the mood. He does not write "*der Abend*," but "*an Abend*"; not "*die Nacht*," but "*in der Nacht*"; not "*der Spring-brunnen*," but "*an Springbrunnen*," etc.; and that should be taken well into consideration.

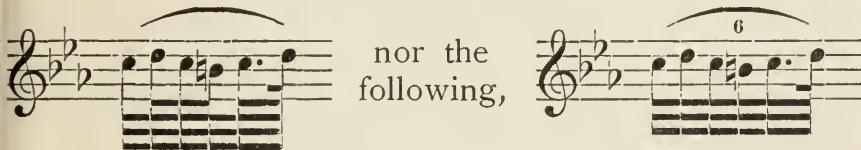
And now to the Sonata. The composition falls in the year 1809; the dates May 4, Op. 81 *A* major, 1809, and January 30, 1810, prefixed. Low Adagio, by Beethoven on the manuscript of Falstaff, et cetera, refer to the departure and return of the Archduke Rudolph. Thus this work does not in any way treat

of the feelings of a pair of lovers at parting and meeting again, as very many suppose, but of the parting of the Archduke Rudolph from Beethoven. To the first three notes of the Introduction, which play an important *rôle* in the course of the first movement, Beethoven has added the word "*Lebewohl!*" (Farewell!)



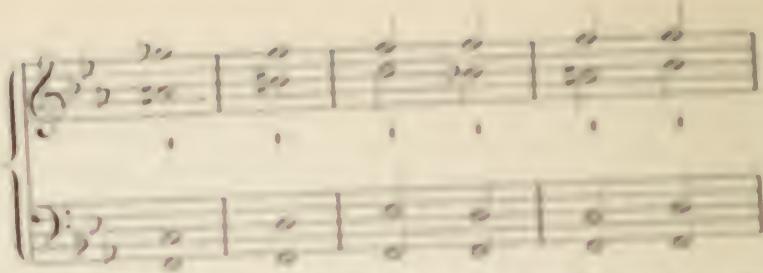
Le - be - wohl!

These notes should not be played *quite legato*, but with the insensibly small pause which the pronunciation of the consonants *b* and *v* inevitably require in singing. If this way of playing is consistently carried out throughout, this motive will always be clearly recognisable, even where it is not strikingly evident. The execution of the turns in the introductory Adagio must be very quiet and soft. We see here, once again, that ornaments of this kind cannot be written out in an entirely adequate manner, for neither this method



is perfectly satisfactory; because according to the first reading, the real turn, *d, e, b*♯, would sound too hasty; according to the second, not quick enough. Still, the latter reading approaches nearer to the wished-for mode of performance. The rests in the last six bars of the Introduction should certainly not be curtailed.

A Period which can easily be missed in expression, is that from the 23rd bar of the Allegro, in which one must make oneself very clear about the harmonic progression, as well as the melodic signification, of the *alto*—



in order to discover the correct mode of *exposition*. One must to some extent forget the pianist, and look upon the right hand part as a two-part passage, not as a solo. How poor is language, when it would like to explain such a delicate mood as is contained in these few bars! And so would I also rather desist from further attempts. But the practical method of not allowing anywhere to escape one how the composer presents his motives, — openly or hidden, in the original form and modified, — this method of thoroughly examining a work of art will always prove excellent. With a motive like Beethoven's *Leitmotif*, consisting of only three diatonic notes in perfectly equal rhythm, one may easily run the risk of imputing to the composer too many combinations. Thus, for instance, one could look upon the notes of the tenor,  $\text{g}, \text{a}, \text{b}_2$  in the 4th bar of the Introduction, as an inversion in rhythmical dimension; one could, in the principal Subject of the Allegro, conceive of the notes  $\text{g}, \text{f}, \text{e}_2$ ,



likewise as an allusion to the motive; but probably one would go too far with an analytical procedure of

his kind. Still, you will find this motive, quite unmistakably, at least sixty times in this movement, and I leave it to you to trace it out throughout. In the Development, the master makes use exclusively of this *Lebewohl* motive, with the rhythmically pregnant motive of the principal Subject,



and it is just here where the two semibreves must always be separated one from another by a very short rest, as, besides, Beethoven has not once prescribed a slur with this motive, while in other respects he has been in no wise sparing with this sign.

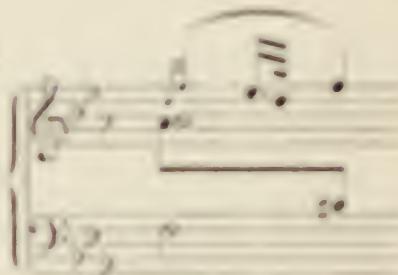
The passage appearing shortly before the close,



which is formed by an accelerated imitation of the motive, has, of course, in its time excited surprise. It must be made intelligible by the mode of performance; for every unprejudiced person will be obliged to admit that the sounding together of  $\frac{g}{e\flat}$  and  $\frac{f}{b\flat}$  has in itself no beauty. If, however, the hearer can follow without trouble the conduct of the parts, as here, he tolerates very well harshnesses of this kind, he follows the parts like the separate threads of a web; and then if dissonances, even of a harsh nature, result from warp and woof, this does not at all disturb the ear of a musician, or in a much less degree than if far less grating dissonances are proffered without the com-

pling authority of polyphony. In this case an, at all times soft, soaring of the pair of notes  $\frac{f}{p}$ , in contradistinction to a sinking to the  $\frac{p}{f}$ , will be the most suitable. Moreover, we shall find an entirely similar passage in the Sonata following, Op. 90.

I know of little to say about the execution of the Andante, for, on the one hand, the mood therein contained is unmistakable, and on the other hand Beethoven has written down the expression marks with a scrupulousness for which one cannot be too grateful. In addition, I will once more mention in regard to it that the small notes in the sixth bar ought not to be anticipated, but that *f*, *so*, and *d* must be struck together.



The execution of the ornaments in bars 9, 16, 18, 25, 32, 34, remains doubtful. Whilst Fétis would have the shake in the 18th bar performed in the following way,



which obviously involves extreme arbitrariness, he keeps complete silence about the analogous passages in the 10th and 9th bars before the close of the Andante. At the risk of exciting your opposition, I

rite down for you that mode of performing the ornaments which is most congenial to me.

Bar 9.

Bar 16.

Agreeing pretty exactly with Bülow's performance of  
the 18th bar:)

Bar 18.

Bar 25 to be performed like bar 9.

Bars 32 and 34 in the following manner:

Others will have their reasons for an entirely different mode of performance.

I must still mention that in bars 17 and 33 certain *ritardando* cannot be avoided in the *tempo*, especially in the second half of the bar, if one does not want to do violence to the most natural emotion. Beethoven knew very well that every genuine musician will here do what is necessary *without* directions, and that a *direction* would drive the majority of players to exaggeration. The last movement is difficult, but scarcely to be mistaken in expression, and consequently I forbear further discussion about it.

With kindest regards, yours, C. R.

Vitzenau, Parsonage No. 1, Augst, 1882.

## XII.

Dearest Lady, — The Sonata Op. 90 furnishes once again an example of how Beethoven Op. 90, E minor, can raise to great importance a very short motive of the greatest significance. Already, in *points* of the Finale of the Waldstein Sonata, I drew your attention to how Beethoven turned the first two notes of the Subject to good account:



In this movement there are the same notes again, in the same rhythmical arrangement:



which play so great a rôle in the course of the movement, and of the employment of which, even when rhythmically changed, you should allow nothing to escape you. The motive ought not to be pressed on the bearer obtrusively, but one must always be fully aware

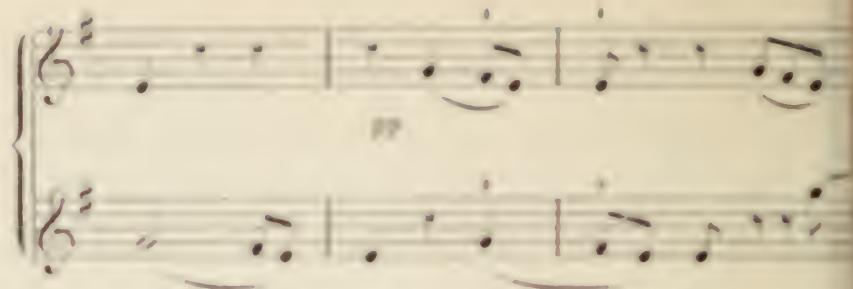
f its occurrence oneself. Bold decision and quiet sub-  
mission, strength and mildness, are placed closely side  
y side in the first movement, and give it a quite  
eculiar, grand stamp. There are in it single passages  
f great difficulty (especially for small hands), which,  
however, could scarcely be altered without doing  
arm. I speak of the semiquaver figure of the left  
hand, which appears first in B minor, afterwards in  
C minor. If the hand absolutely requires a facilitation,  
he following ways of playing may be proposed:—

or

Although the latter kind of facilitation is an infraction  
of the rhythm, it yet has the merit that it makes the  
most of the melody formation of the upper part, in  
a style similar to Beethoven's, while in sufficiently  
quick *tempo* the slighter mobility is, perhaps, not quite  
so perceptible.

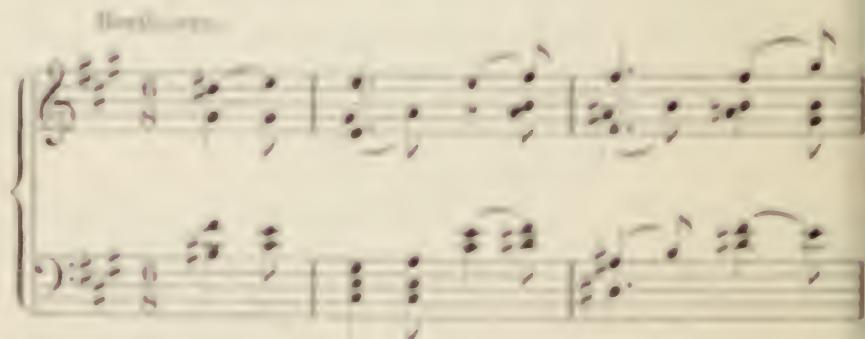
I have mentioned already, in my last letter, that in  
this Sonata likewise a passage exists in which, through  
the contraction of the imitation, notes come together  
simultaneously, which, played without intelligence, must  
sound to the hearer quite intolerable. The passage is  
at the end of the Development, and runs:—

8va.....



The last movement is of singularly charm, and warmth to be played with heartfelt, but quite simple, expression. At the repeatedly occurring changes from semiquavers to quaver triplets, one must be very careful to avoid a change of tempo. It is always a proof of genuine musicianship if a player continues in absolutely equal time at the change from triple or quadruplet to triple time.

The Sonata in A major, Op. 101, already belongs to the group of the "last five." It has Op. 101, been interesting to me to discover that A major, Beethoven, at the Finale of the E minor Sonata points unmistakably to the peculiarity of Mendelssohnian melody, in this Sonata produces chiefly the Robert Schumann harmonies, without one's being able to reproach one of the younger masters with plagiarism.



Schumann. 3rd movement of the Bflat major Symphony.



While Beethoven elsewhere in his first sonatas—novenements without exception—even in the very fast ones—lets much variety prevail with respect to rhythm, he in this movement—only marked “Etwas lebhaft”—persists always in those kinds of notes which already appear in the first two bars. Striking, also, is the extraordinary brevity of the form. Already from the ninth or tenth bar, before the principal motive has yet been brought to a close, the modulation to the dominant begins, and as here the first motive overlaps the modulation group, so also does the scarcely-suggested second Subject the coda, in such a manner that the first part concludes already with the thirty-fourth bar.

Beethoven furnishes the Development exclusively with the employment of the principal motive:—



at first in its entirety, then turning to account only the last four notes, finally the first two notes of the same. Already in the fifty-seventh bar, the Development comes to an end, and now follows, with somewhat amplified coda, the return of the first part, with the self-evident modulation to the tonic.

The whole movement is as if shrouded in twilight, only towards the end of the movement does the master

call for a *fortissimo* for a very short time; but even in *forte* passages there are only very few, quickly fleeting; all the rest is marked *p*, *pp*, and *mf*. Every player of intelligence and correct feeling will know how to give the correct colouring to the movement accordingly, avoiding throughout every sharp accent, producing even the few *forzati* with full, soft tone and performing the *forte* passages without any hardness. The fourth bar of this movement requires special attention, in order that the following bar may stand out from it satisfactorily. A *diminuendo* and an imperceptible slackening of the pace will serve the purpose. In the ninth bar it is impossible to tie the upper parts, and yet hold down the notes  $\mathbf{a}$  &  $\mathbf{c}$ , as Beethoven directs. If, however, one uses the pedal from the fourth quaver onwards, one can quit the  $\mathbf{e}$  with the second finger, without its being in the slightest perceptible.

It is remarkable that immediately at the beginning of the Development, Beethoven has written the principal motive in a different form from before, namely:—



while it must undoubtedly be played here just the same as everywhere. I therefore think of it as written in the following manner:—



Below has inserted ties here, in the right hand, which certainly do not exist in the autograph:—



The supposition that Beethoven might have forgotten them is, after all, very likely; but that he should have forgotten them *both* times is, on the other hand, improbable. The turn in the thirteenth bar must, in accordance with the character of the movement, be played quietly, but not divided in conformity with the time. Semiquavers would be too dragging, demi-semiquavers too hurrying. The thirteenth and twelfth bars before the end are difficult, if one wants to do justice to the demands of the *legato*. Perhaps my fingering will please you?



Instead of a minuet or scherzo, Beethoven has furnished a march-like movement ("Vivace alla Marcia"). The principal division is almost entirely formed out of the short principal motive; a thorough analysis here also will be very beneficial. The shakes in the fifth and seventh bars of the second part begin with the principal note, and will not be able to contain more than five notes, if the turn at the end consists of two. Bars 19-22 of the second part will sound absolutely somewhat indistinct and vague, as Beethoven requires the raising of the dampers through all four bars, in order that the low  $d\flat$  may continue sounding as pedal-point. This confusion of sound can be somewhat lessened if during the first two bars one plays the two upper parts with *one* hand (provided that the stretching capacity of the right hand admits of it), holds down the  $d\flat$ , on the other hand, uninter-

ruptedly with a finger of the left hand, and now let the dampers fall again more often:—

To the loud and decided ending of the principal division is placed in sharp contrast the delicate middle part in B major. It begins *pianissimo* and *dolce*, and dies away to the utmost *pianissimo*. In the fifth bar not only must the left hand break off promptly, but also the right must make the entry of the following bar with its new motive perceptible. Bars seventeen and eighteen must be ordered that false relations<sup>10</sup> may not

<sup>10</sup> Should the term "false relation" be wanting in your vocabulary, I permit myself to explain to you this *technique* in the following manner. False relation is the appearance of a chromatically-altered note in a different part from that which it escaped before without this chromatic alteration, e.g.—

sound, which yet, indeed, do not exist) be played as follows:—



Beethoven has not written an independent slow movement to this sonata. The deeply melancholy introduction to the Finale ought to be played "slowly and full of longing" (*langsam und sehr suchtsvoll.*) There is no dynamic sign until immediately before the cadenza; as, however the composer has prescribed the use of the Una Corda pedal up to the re-entry of the first  $\frac{6}{8}$  bar, there can be no doubt that the Adagio is to be played softly throughout. Beethoven has only a few times prescribed the use of the other pedal; but apart from this fact, that it is also to be employed at other passages with good effect, it must be used always, unconditionally, from the 12th to the 16th bar for the duration of the first crotchet, as the short appoggiaturas in the bass (*c*, *b*, *a* $\natural$ , *g* $\natural$ ) form the fundamental notes of the respective harmonies, and must, consequently, continue sounding. A rhythmical disposition of the little cadenza marked "non Presto", would be difficult, and perhaps scarcely intended by the composer. I conceive of it dreamily played, without any sort of accent, beginning very quietly and gradually somewhat hastened. If the first movement of this sonata was very brief, and the third aphoristically planned, Beethoven considered it all the more necessary by a broadly worked out Finale to give the sonata the requisite backbone, the full measure of importance.

The Finale is written in the form of a first sonata movement, and the Development is represented by a fugato. This episode could hardly be called a fugue: the Answer to the Subject does not correspond with the usual practice carried out by Bach, and also in other respects followed by Beethoven. A delicate humorous tinge pervades the whole movement, and already at the beginning, at the entry of the first Subject with its inviations, the player should endeavour to individualize the two parts in a delicate manner, so that, as it were, the impression of a dialogue may result. For this purpose, the same shades of expression in both hands would not, according to my feelings, be suitable. So far as finer renderings of this kind at all allow of being indicated, what I have in my mind would have to be notated somewhat as follows:-

The two pauses now following,

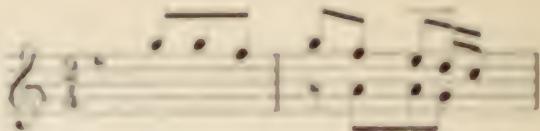


(which, as a matter of course, must neither be held according to the double, nor according to the quadruple value of the notes, but set free from all *tempo*) involve a slight *slentando* in the preceding bar. Just as a rolling ball becomes slower by degrees, before it completely stops, so will a fermata appearing after rapid motion have to be prepared, in the majority of cases, by means of a suitable slackening. After this pause, the left hand takes the lead, and the right would have to answer in a manner similar to what was proposed above. The melodic phrase



which is built up upon the semiquaver motive of the Subject, must be played with great warmth and fervour, in spite of the prescribed *piano*. Only in the 27th bar after the commencement of this charming episode, does Beethoven return to the former gracefully humorous character.

About the rendering of the fugato, there is only to be said that it wants, like every polyphonic composition, to be *technically* mastered in order to be heard in all clearness. The fifth-progression in the 30th bar after the cancelling of the original signature



may astonish this person or the other; it must not, however, be overlooked that the alto forms an imitation of the treble, and that here all four parts go their independent way. Progressions of this sort, (and even the greatest harshnesses), are very well tolerated by the ear when a logical composition exists for the progression of the parts. In an entirely homophonic movement, on the other hand, similar consecutive fifths might do harm. In the 9th bar before the re-entry of the principal Subject in A major, it appears in the bass in double augmentation, and so must be brought into strong relief.



The vibrando before the three final bars ought not to be too slight. I recommend to you the following fingering for the ticklish passage from the 24th bar before the end:

Although this A major sonata is probably the least important among the last five, and on the other hand, does not surpass the finest of the earlier ones, nevertheless it remains a charming and infinitely interesting tone-creation.

My next letter will have to occupy itself with the Sonata, Op. 106, in B $\flat$  major. Until then,

I remain, yours sincerely,

C. R.

*Leipzig, January 1897.*

### XIII.

Fortify yourself with patience, dear Friend, for one cannot be concise about the Sonata for the "Hammer-klavier" when one has once proposed to Sonata Op. 106, oneself to treat it thoroughly. Many B $\flat$  maj. things will here strike him who is familiar with the Beethoven formation as made use of in the earlier sonatas, as deviating from his earlier style. It will not have escaped you that up till now Beethoven seldom produces one and the same passage more than twice unaltered; already at the third time he awakens a new interest in the hearer by some alteration, amplification, or the like, and on this account real sequences only rarely occur in Beethoven's works. A striking exception is to be found, it is true, in the Sonata Op. 53, at the end of the first and beginning of the second part, *i. e.* where the motive

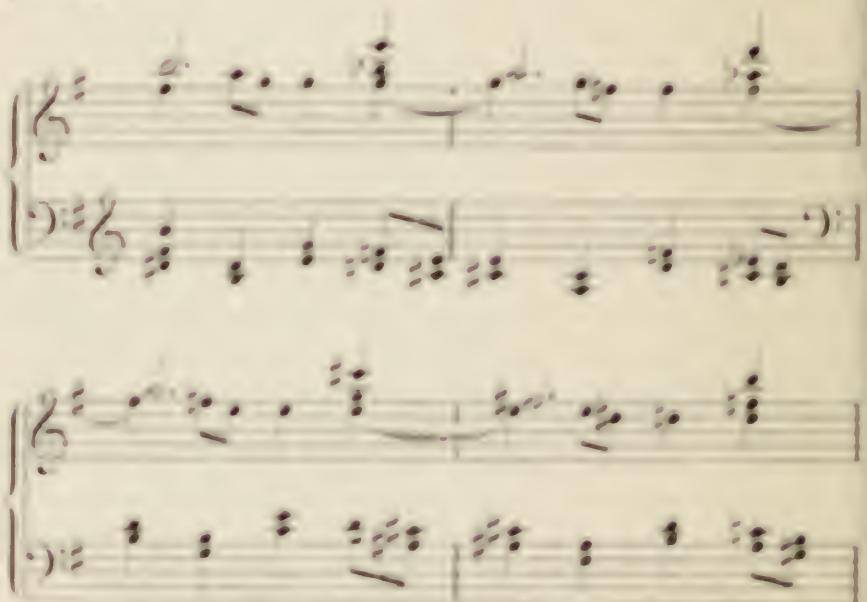


follows no less than six times in succession. I confess honestly, but as concerns Beethoven with all becoming respect, that this has never been congenial to me. In the Sonata Op. 106, however, we encounter, from

the 17th bar on, a four-fold repetition of the first two bars

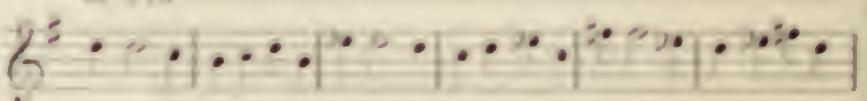


and then the last bar is again repeated three times, always one degree higher. Bar 26, counted from the G major signature, we meet with the following passage:—



In the second part, from bar 5, it reads:

*ad 8th*



soon afterwards:—



and a few bars later:

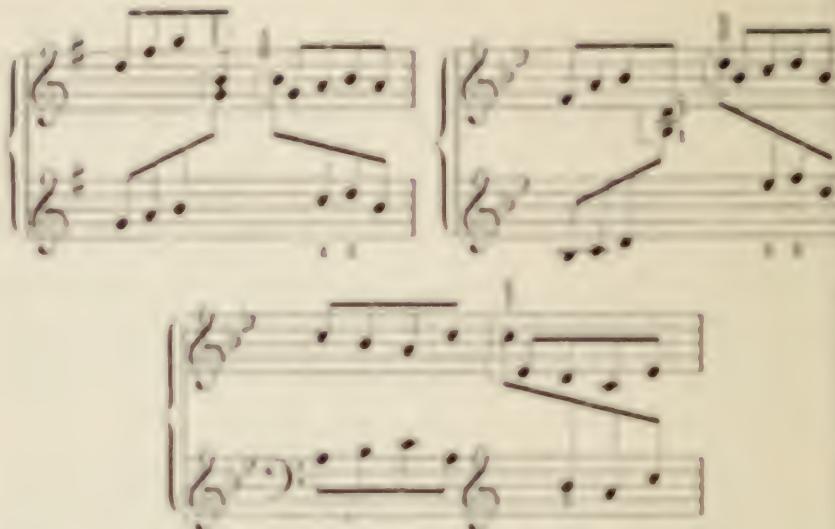


Then there is to be found again a similar sequence from the *fortissimo*. That is (counting in the parallel passages) a striking number of sequences! No doubt this is connected with the unusually broad plan of the entire movement, such as just a Beethoven only could be master of, and one thinks involuntarily of the words "Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi."

That in the unusually broadly planned first movement, the key of the upper dominant (F major) slips past only once, and indeed only for the short space of two bars, in contradistinction to the else universally practised arrangement, may, I suppose, be designated as something equally rare. Just as in the great B $\flat$  major Trio, Op. 97, Beethoven concludes the first part in this movement in G major. The seven-bar Periods with which the Scherzo begins are likewise something of extreme rarity with Beethoven, and even here he forms them each through the three-fold repetition of a motive.

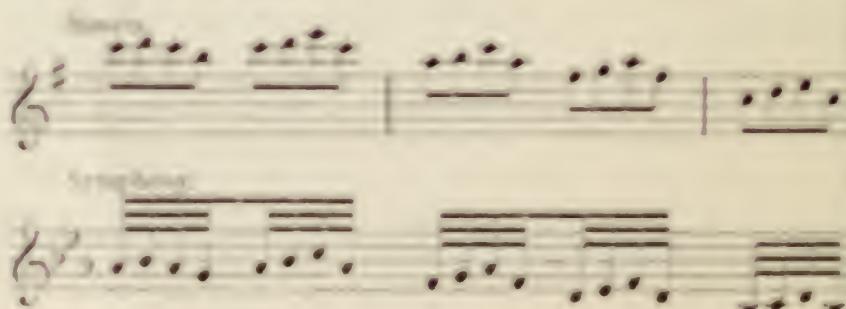
And now let me go into the separate movements more minutely.—Beethoven himself has marked the *tempo* of the  $\text{d}=138$  M. M., yet each will probably ask himself whether the grand character of the movement would not be given better effect to with a somewhat more moderate *tempo*. The passages where the composer (bar 10 from the G major signature, &c.) makes the two hands slip over and through one another, and exchange the same notes with one another, are ticklish tasks for the player. The passage is so

much the more difficult is that it has to be played delicately and fluently. I have always used the following fingering myself:—



Whoever should have anything to say against this will yet be obliged to admit that Fellow was right where he asserted that a perfectly correct performance of this passage would only be possible on a pianoforte with two manuals, and thus that at all events a compromise would have to be made.

I will not omit to call your attention to the correspondence between this square figure, and a demi-semiquaver figure in the Adagio of Beethoven's B flat major Symphony.



in the performance of shake and melody or shake and bass in *one* hand, I have already tried to give you directions on former occasions. Moreover, in nearly every edition you find such passages written out in notes.

The entry of the second Subject joins the preceding, 16-bar long quaver figure, and for this reason special care is to be taken that the second Subject stands out nevertheless from what goes before. Hence the *decrescendo* prescribed for the last half of the bar is not to be overlooked, while at the same time the chords of the right hand are to be entirely subordinated. According to my conception, therefore, the expression would have to be represented in the following manner:—



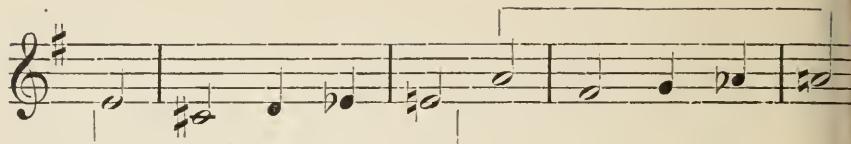
For the quaver figure entering soon after, both fingerings as added by me above and below the notes are, perhaps, equally good.



Finally, I call your attention to the relation of the motive



to the preceding bass:—



as a rhythmical diminution of the same. Whether in the third division of this movement (in the 13th bar after the restoration of the B<sub>7</sub> major signature) the second quaver of the alto should be *a* or *a* is difficult to decide; for each reading has something to be said for it. Further, there has always existed a doubt in respect of the 6th bar after the D major signature which follows later:



The harshness of the *c* in the right hand against the *b* of the bass is the cause; a few editions have on this account altered the *b* in the bass into *c*—by which means, however, the logical congruity with which Beethoven has preserved the thematic tenths is set aside—while Bülow lets the *c* in the chord remain. I think that the passing, it is true, sharp, dissonance is not unpleasantly perceptible if one realises that Beethoven has *anticipated* the harmony, as concerns the bass, consistently. In accordance with this, the second crotchet always belongs already to the bass note only then following:—



similar cases are frequently to be met with in Joh. S. Bach; for instance, in the recitative "Ach Golgotha,"

the *St. Matthew Passion*, where the semiquavers of the "Oboi di caccia" always anticipate the harmony which follows, as is quite evident from the following extract:—



the consecutive fifths also



might shock; I may remind you, however, of what I have already said on a former occasion about Beethoven consecutive fifths. Also in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* consecutive fifths are to be found, *e.g.* in the chorus "Ja nicht auf das Fest":



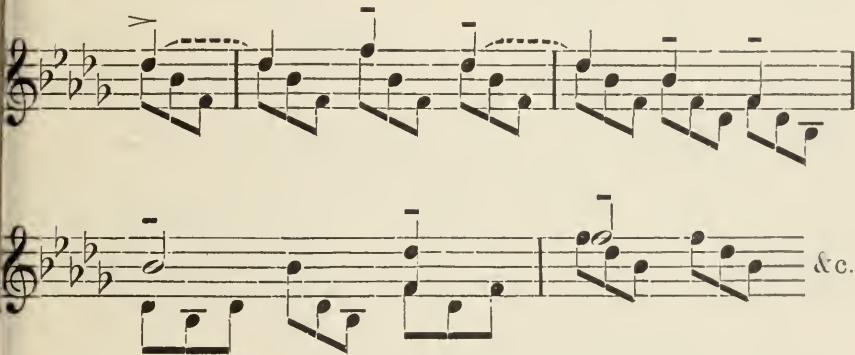
There is before the return to the first Subject, B major signature, and this induced Hans von Bülow to dispute the generally adopted correction of a Beethoven *lapsus*, whilst he wanted the last two bars before the B<sub>2</sub> major to be played with *a*, as follows:—



while all other editors had supposed that it was a slip of the pen by Beethoven since he has throughout forgotten to write the natural before *a*. A sketch of this passage, which Nottebohm afterwards gave, also verifies this probable conjecture.

And consequently, I know of nothing further to tell you about this movement, as richly as, on the other hand, economically constructed, excepting only what Robert Schumann said to a pupil after his finishing the whole movement: "You must hear that played by Clara some day!"

The Scherzo is surprisingly briefly and simply constructed; the first seven-bar Period is repeated in the octave above with a small alteration of the final bar; the second, extending to only 16 bars, ditto, yet without any variation. The Trio is similarly constructed, only somewhat more complicated in so far as Beethoven, at the repetition, makes over the melody to the bass, and has the right hand follow in imitation. Here, then, not every first note of the quaver triplets should be equally strongly accented, but only those which are to be considered as melody notes:—



The two quavers imitating the close of the Scherzo want playing with a certain humour wherever they appear (bars 1 and 2, 9 and 10, 17 and 18, 26 and 27, of the B<sub>flat</sub> minor.) For the rest, this Trio is to be played, according to Beethoven's own instructions, with simplicity; he once again prescribes "semplice." In rendering also the principal division, one ought not to be over elaborate. The Presto  $\frac{2}{4}$  will bear an as it were dramatic rendering; eight bars *piano*, fleeting by like shadows, eight bars powerfully *crescendo* up to the *fortissimo* which follows with its ten *sforzati*. Also the cadenza and the first two bars of the *tempo primo* remain *ff*. For the cadenza I make use of a different division between the hands to that which Beethoven

prescribes, because the ending would be very inconvenient to play in this manner.



When Beethoven manages the bass in bars 19 and 20 of the Scherzo differently from at its repetition, this is once more an indication that he did not always simply copy himself at parallel passages, and that, therefore, many go too far in their desire for levelling. It is an interesting fact that Beethoven, after he had already sent this Sonata to the publishers for printing, sent afterwards by letter what is now the first bar of the Adagio. One looks with admiration up to the man who, after he has created so wonderful an Adagio, reflects still further about it, and finally adds *one* bar, consisting of *two* notes—the simple interval, *a-c $\sharp$ !* I wonder whether Beethoven has added these two bars with reference to the Adagio itself, or with reference to the connection with the preceding Scherzo, or, finally, in relation to the whole sonata! Who is to know? I

am not disinclined to suspect the last named, for what an important rôle the interval of a third plays in the entire sonata! It is true, this is not to the ear a striking interval-progression, but neither is the progression to the perfect fifth, and yet one speaks with perfect justice of a "Fifth-Quartet" by Haydn. The octave is likewise the most natural interval conceivable, and extremely often made use of; for all that, it is not to be denied that it impresses a special stamp on the Ninth Symphony. Now, however, I ask you to accompany me on an excursion through the sonata, in order to trace out the characteristic thirds. I will make them always specially distinguishable by a bracket.

*Allegro.*

The musical score for the Allegro section consists of three staves of music. The top staff is in common time, E-flat major, with a basso continuo bassoon part. The middle staff is in common time, E major. The bottom staff is in common time, G major. Brackets are placed under specific notes in each staff to highlight characteristic thirds. The score concludes with the instruction "&c." (and so on).

*Scherzo.*

The musical score for the Scherzo section consists of two staves of music. The top staff is in common time, B-flat major. The bottom staff is in common time, B-flat major. Brackets are placed under specific notes in each staff to highlight characteristic thirds. The score concludes with the instruction "&c." (and so on).



A musical score for piano, featuring four staves of music. The top two staves are in G major (two sharps) and the bottom two are in E major (one sharp). The music consists of a series of chords and melodic lines. In the middle section, there is a label "&c." indicating a continuation of the pattern. The score is written in a clear, professional style with standard musical notation including treble and bass clefs, key signatures, and time signatures.

What a succession of thirds!

*Allegro risoluto.*

A musical score for piano, featuring two staves. The top staff is in 3/4 time and the bottom staff is in 4/4 time. The music begins with a dynamic 'tr' (trill) over a sustained note. The melody consists of eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff features a bass line with sustained notes and eighth-note patterns. The score is marked with 'tr' and 'tr' again, indicating trills.

Of course I have considered it superfluous to cite parallel passages. But from what has been quoted it is clear that not only all the four movements begin with thirds, but that also, for the rest, all the other motives of importance frequently exhibit this interval-progression. And should it be rash to descry in this a design on the part of the composer, it is at least as rash to want to explain the undeniable fact as a mere accident. I am hardly the first who has made this discovery, but even were it so, it must be acknowledged that a certain something in the sonata must have induced me to establish the fact; many may well go octave- and fifth-hunting from the mere hunting instinct, but scarcely third-hunting!

The third movement bears, besides the *tempo* indication, the directions "Appassionato e con molto sentimento," and "Una corda, mezza voce." That is, to be played "with half voice on one string," and, in spite of this, passionately. But whoever is capable of sinking himself wholly in this world of music ("Tonwelt") will comprehend what the composer wishes, and will succeed in approaching his demands. It seems to me that the mood of the movement is not to be mistaken; a deep melancholy speaks unmistakably out from it, but a sublime one, not such as hugs its pain, and is inaccessible to comfort, as the whole movement ends in the brightening major. The movement divides into two halves, of which the second begins with the 88th bar; from there the coming 67 bars follow the first half almost quite exactly, only in rich variation and with partly different modulations. What then follows is not difficult to refer to the preceding. The episode from the 69th bar on, requires special attention, so that the appearance of the first Subject (combined with the third-progression of the first bar) nowhere escapes the hearer. Also in the 12th bar before the

st F $\sharp$  minor signature, this combination again appears. In the last bar before the entry of the principal Subject, we meet with the peculiarity, appearing also in the sonata Op. 110, and first in the 'cello sonata Op. 69, that two notes of the same pitch joined to each other by ties, are marked alternately with the fingering 4 3. What Beethoven wished the second note struck is difficult to believe, because then the tie would be quite superfluous, and because by striking the note again the character of the syncopation is disturbed; and Beethoven has made use of this direction at syncopations only.

I have heard that on the old Vienna pianos still a slight after-pressure has been possible even though the key had been pressed down already once, and it is quite conceivable that in this manner a peculiar effect of sound has been producible. As such a thing, however, is not feasible on modern instruments, I am of opinion that one should put a repetition of the note with the third finger out of the question, in order not to disturb the syncopation. In the present case, where the shorter syncopation arises out of the longer, it seems to me to be by no means correct.

The Finale begins with a Largo. Beethoven himself seems to have feared that many might stumble in deciphering the peculiar notation at the beginning, for he considers the good advice necessary, to count four semiquavers. That is to say, he directs "Per la misura si conta nel Largo sempre quattro semicrome." With the signature  $\frac{4}{4}$ , however, it is also an odd business, for up to the first bar-line there are, properly counted, 35, and up to the second, 40 semiquavers. For easier guidance, I render the first bars into the following notation:—

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4



The rhythm appearing later on, shortly before the *Allegro risoluto*, is likewise more easily read in the following notation:—

The fugue is superscribed, "Fuga a 3 voci con alcuna licenze." But even if Beethoven deemed it right to inform us that he has allowed himself some licences, one must nevertheless admire the artistic formation of the fugue, with its augmentations and inversions of the Subject. The Subject appears complete in its

original form, it is true, only seven times, whilst a part of the counterpoint is heard about thirty times.



To take in hand a detailed written analysis seems to me an undertaking not to be carried out; it would fill sheets!

I will mention still that the episode in crotchets may have arisen out of a fragment of the Subject:

Bar 9 of the Subject.



Beethoven has required a turn for the shake in the Subject; where, however, a chain of shakes arises out of it, only the last of the shakes receives a turn. What Beethoven wrote to Ferdinand Ries with regard to this sonata is in the highest degree noteworthy:—“Should the sonata not be suitable for London, I could send another, or *you can also leave out the Largo and begin immediately with the Fugue in the last movement, or the first movement Adagio, and for the third the Scherzo and the Largo and Allo risoluto.*—I leave this to you as you think best.” It furnishes food for reflection when one learns that Beethoven declared himself in agreement with such a metamorphosis of his work. What modesty in such a giant intellect! And one trains oneself already to be somebody if one only comprehends him! But, after all, “To recognize the noble is gain which never can be snatched away from us,” says Goethe, if I mistake not, in *Tasso*.—Yours faithfully,

C. R.

Leipzig, February 15, 1897.

## XIV.

I ought to remonstrate with you because you confess to me that you do not find the last movement of the B $\flat$  major Sonata beautiful? Why should I? I prize honesty at all costs, and—to be honest also on my side—I believe no non-musician when he asserts that he likes the movement. In such a case I must always think of how, on a similar occasion, a very great artist once said to me with a deep sigh, "There is an enormous number of musical hypocrites!" Upon the whole, all the "last five"—in spite of the energetic propaganda of a Bülow—have never been able so to fix themselves in the public favour as have the finest of the earlier period; and that is to be accounted for on several grounds. First, the fugal style in which the Finales of the Sonatas 101, 106, and 110 are treated is not to everyone's taste.\* Then the tone-effect ("Klangwirkung") of these Sonatas is, undeniably, often no longer so beautiful as in Beethoven's earlier creations, for he frequently employs in them the extremest regions of the tone-system, without being able to fill up the gap occasioned thereby. Further, one no longer finds in them—except in the B $\flat$  major Sonata—an independent, broadly worked-out Adagio; and finally, the remarkably short closes—even falling frequently on the weak beats—may also have their share in it.

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\* Even Berlioz writes about the fugue in an incomprehensible manner, as follows:—"This mass of entries of the different parts, the canonical imitations; these fragments of dislocated, pell-mell, mutually pursuing, fleeing from one another, revolving over one another, phrases; this confusion which excludes all true melody, where the chords follow on one another so quickly that one is scarcely able to grasp their character; this perpetual surging to and fro of the entire system; this appearance of disorder; these sudden interruptions of one part by another;—all these abominable harmonic fooleries (!) which would have been quite suitable to depict a revel of savages, or a dance of demons." I wonder whether Cherubini was right when he affirmed, "Berlioz does not like fugue, because it does not like him"?

For the impartial hearer unwillingly dispenses with a complete slow movement, pleasant-sounding euphony, and satisfactory closes, while, on the other hand, "the wonderful emanation of a supernaturally glorified sublimity and profundity" (as Wasielewski very correctly characterizes the peculiarity of the Beethoven creations of the last period) is not sufficiently clear to him.—

Not a single one of the remaining sonatas by

Beethoven exhibits such a free-fantastic

Sonata  
E major  
Op. 109. first movement as the E major Sonata,  
Op. 109. Accordingly, it perhaps appears  
somewhat bold to want to recognise in

it the usual form of the first sonata-movement (although very much modified); but each Beethoven movement is to be traced back to some form or other, and perhaps my view may meet with your concurrence. The eight bars "Vivace" form the principal Subject, the Adagio leads into the upper dominant, after a new idea has appeared at the beginning, representing the second Subject. With the *tempo primo* begins a utilization of the principal Subject (Development), and with the 10th bar before the second Adagio, the resumption of the first part enters. Now begins the Adagio a fifth lower than before, and finishes in the principal key, to which then follows still a Coda. But everything appears aphoristically, the first as well as, above all, the second Subject and the quasi-Development being treated almost in *Lied* style.

The “Vivace ma non troppo” should be played only moderately quick; in order to discover the correct expression it is advisable to play it at first as follows:—

and only then in the Beethoven analysis of melody and harmony. In the 4th and 5th bars of the Adagio, the first notes in the right hand must be sounded so sonorously and so firmly held, with the help of the pedal, that they link themselves on melodically closely to the semiquavers following:



The *ritardando* prescribed in the penultimate bar must be performed in such a way that the demisemiquavers combine quite naturally with the semiquavers. From the entry of the "Tempo 1<sup>0</sup>" up to the return of the first Subject, we find the unequal number of 33 bars; nevertheless, one discovers the correct rendering immediately, if one imagines throughout 4- or 2-bar Periods, of which only the one which leads into thrice-accented *b*, would be extended to a 5-bar one. It ought not to be over-looked that the last "Tempo 1<sup>0</sup>" only begins with the second crotchet of the bar. The connecting notes



must be played very quietly, and the augmentation of the three crotchets



in the three bars afterwards following



nust be rendered audibly prominent by the *crescendo* at that passage being treated very significantly, the augmentation, on the other hand, played very softly and expressively—as it were an echo. For the rest, Beethoven's notation is, indeed, thoroughly clear.

In the Prestissimo now following, the bass of the Subject plays as great a rôle as the Subject itself, and here it may not be out of place to call your attention to this peculiarity of Beethoven, often appearing, especially in the last periods, this *equal value* of bass and treble,—a peculiarity which often makes it difficult for the uninitiated to recognise the real Subject with certainty as such. In the last string Quartets, as well as in the 'cello Sonatas Op. 102, this peculiarity is favoured especially frequently, and it often appears as if the master wanted to avoid the sharp opposition of the dual formation. In the second movement of this Sonata Beethoven employs the bass motive



from the first positive close in B minor (bar 65) through the whole of the 54 bars following, almost uninterruptedly, in portions as well as in its integrity, in its original form as well as in inversion, in double counterpoint in the octave and in canon. And as, accordingly, an independent trio does not exist, but on the other hand, a regular Development, whilst besides, the last third-part of the movement coincides fully with the first, one might be tempted to consider this Prestissimo as a movement written in brief sonata form.

In the Theme to the Variations which form the final movement of this Sonata, the broken chords (bars 5 and 13) ought not to forestall the bass, but the first note in the right hand must coincide exactly with the bass note. On the other hand, in the 14th bar the c♯ of the melody must fall on the first

quaver, as follows from the 22nd and 30th bars of the third Variation. Equally of course the little notes in bar 6 of the Theme must be deducted from the second, and not from the third, crotchet. According to my own feelings, the Theme and the first Variation are of such unutterable beauty that none of the Variations following are in a position to come up to or to surpass them at all.

An analysis of the separate Variations must appear superfluous, as their relations to the Theme are clear enough; I will only call your attention to this,—that in Var. 3 again the bass of the Theme is first of all the moving principle (see my remark above),

Bass of the theme.

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is labeled 'Bass of the theme.' and has a treble clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 3/4 time signature. It consists of a series of eighth notes. The bottom staff is labeled 'Var. 3.' and has a bass clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 4/4 time signature. It features a bass line with eighth notes and a series of sixteenth-note patterns. The two staves are aligned vertically to show their correspondence.

and that the semiquaver figure in Var. IV likewise is deduced from the bass of the Theme.

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff has a bass clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 8/8 time signature. It consists of a bass line with eighth notes. The bottom staff has a treble clef, a key signature of four sharps, and a 3/4 time signature. It features a treble line with eighth notes and a series of sixteenth-note patterns. The two staves are aligned vertically to show their correspondence.

About the rendering of the Variations, Beethoven's exact directions give sufficient information to every intelligent player, and I intend to specially mention only a few passages. In order that the passage in

the second Variation marked "teneramente" may not sound as if the motive

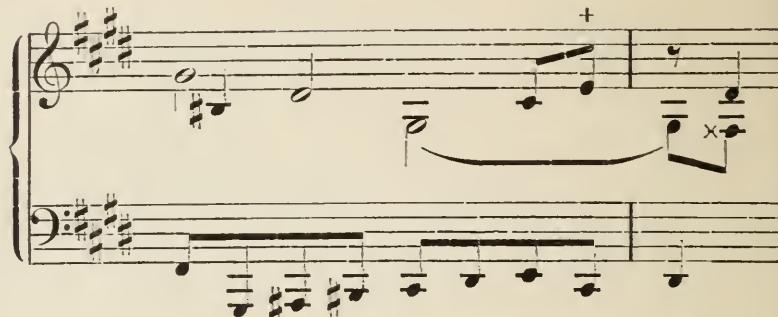


were repeated four times by *one* part (whilst in fact the present is a two-part movement in which one part always overlaps the other), great care has to be taken that the progression of parts is made quite clear to the hearer. For this purpose I propose the following *nuances*:—

In the second part of the 4th Variation, the accents and *sforzati* prescribed by Beethoven are to be considered as showing that not every semiquaver of the highest part ought to be equally emphasized, that is to say, not thus:—

but in such a manner that the following rhythm makes itself heard:—

In some editions the last quaver in the highest part is wanting in bar 19 of the 5th Variation.



By leaving out the *e*, which, moreover, exists in Beethoven's autograph, hidden as well as obvious octaves are formed in the extreme parts.

The last but one of the Sonatas (Op. 110, in A $\flat$  major) again approaches more to the Op. 110, sonata form as Beethoven formerly cultivated it, only he has retained neither the slow movement nor the final movement, independently. After he has let a fugue follow, in direct succession, the wonderfully glorified slow part, he interrupts it again by that same Adagio, and then finishes with the fugue more and more worked up. Beethoven has indeed written the strange passage, bar 5 of the third movement, as it exists in the oldest edition, and in nearly all later ones; while Bülow furnishes another notation, against which no reasonable being will have anything to object. But since every sensible person will recognize in the Beethoven manuscript nothing more than a *Bebung (Vibrato)*, amounting to mere sound-effect, which begins slow and *piano*, gets quicker and louder, and then relapses again, the Beethoven notation was, in the main, intelligible enough and scarcely needed putting to rights. The striking similarity between a leading motive of this Sonata and that of a Sonata from Beethoven's earliest period, is noteworthy and interesting.

In this first movement the song element predominates throughout; even in the Development it does not cease for an instant, and Beethoven's directions 'cantabile', 'molto espressivo,' 'con amabilità,' 'sanft,' — point most positively to a 'singing' style of performance. With regard to the accompaniment-figure beginning with the 5th bar, I may mention that in accordance with the old rule given also by Hummel in his Pianoforte School, the bass note of such an accompaniment-formula must always be held on, thus:—

The demisemiquaver figure which follows ought not to sound in the least 'bravura'; even at this place the direction "cantabile" should be attended to, so that the hearer may imagine he hears something like the following as an inner part:—

As to the way of playing, an analogy is to be found in the Sonata Op. 14, No. 1, and I refer you to what I have there said about it; for the rest, that passage should be rendered loudly, and this one delicately and slightly accelerated. The chain of shakes in the

bass is to be played without a turn to each separate shake, and in the right hand the small notes preceding the melody notes are to be played as fast as possible almost simultaneously with the melody notes. In the bars now following, the quavers furnished with dots over the notes are not to be played really short, but only to be slightly shortened (by about a demisemiquaver):—



The Development is an exceedingly short one, and made up of the constant repetition of two bars taken from the principal Subject, which are heard in the highest part nine times in succession. At the ninth, the return of the first part begins simultaneously, this time combined with the above-mentioned demisemiquaver figure in the bass. In order to obviate the threatened danger of monotony, the rendering of just this Development must not only follow the author's directions very faithfully, but ought to be made the most of by a discreet accelerating of the *tempo* during the first 14 bars, while an equally discreet *ritardando* has then, with the entry of the principal Subject, to lead again into the original *tempo*.

The 'architecture' of the movement following, superscribed "Allegro molto," is so easily recognisable that any explanation appears quite superfluous. But I should like to draw your attention to the origin of the first bars of the second part, which arise from bars 6 and 7 of the first part. Beethoven liked to connect in such a manner the opening bars of a new Period with the closing bars of the preceding. As a

urther example I may quote the following passage from the Finale of the Sonata, Op. 90:—



He who has accustomed himself to listen to this master always with attention, will recall very many similar passages. On occasion of the motive



Bülow recommends a “long-winded” (*langathmige*) rendering, “in order to avoid a trivialisation of the popular conceit”. In fact, these two bars are identical with the beginning of a frivolous North German song, and I candidly admit that this striking similarity in sound has always much disturbed me. The middle movement in D♭ major ends with a four-fold repetition of the very bar which also forms the commencement of the middle movement, and the following division of the hands will prove practical, because otherwise a retardation (produced by the skipping of the left hand from thrice-marked *d* to small *f*, as Beethoven requires) is unavoidable:—



There are few musical inspirations in which the composer advances such claims on a genuinely musical, as well as poetical, rendering, as in the now following final movement of the Sonata. The first three bars, superscribed "Adagio ma non troppo", ought not to be taken too slowly, having regard to the bar marked "piu Adagio". Also at the "Adagio ma non troppo" in  $\frac{12}{16}$ , dragging of the *tempo* would be inappropriate. Beethoven's heading "klagender Gesang" "Mournful song" (which, for the rest, is not in the first edition but is, I suppose, to be found in the autograph), gives a clear intimation concerning the rendering wished for by the author. When the Arioso returns later on, a semitone lower (in G minor), it wants to be played still more resignedly; the melody is continually interrupted by short rests (which the Italians call, very characteristically, "sospiri"), and these give to the movement the character of a musical monologue interrupted by sobs. Beethoven writes above the movement "Ermattet, klagend, perdendo le forze, dolente" (wearied, plaintive, losing strength, with grief).

The Fugue is a three-part one, and the quietly flowing Subject intimates plainly enough that it is to be performed throughout in a singing style. The last four bars before the newly entering Arioso in G minor, show clearly that Beethoven conceived of the quavers of the Fugue in pretty much the same rate of movement as the semiquavers in the Arioso. Let no entry of the Subject, no Augmentation, no Diminution and Double Diminution of it, escape you in the "Fuga" and "L'inversione della Fuga"! Towards the close of the movement, from the re-entry of the A $\flat$  major signature on, Beethoven gives up the strict polyphony of the fugal style; broadly *cantabile*, the Sonata ends with a brilliancy such as has not yet shone forth in the entire work.

I must still call your attention to the quite original course of modulations which Beethoven has taken in

this movement. He begins in B $\flat$  minor, Arioso and Fuga are in A $\flat$  minor and A $\flat$  major, then follow—once more a degree lower—G minor and G major, and finally, the movement closes, as a matter of course, again in A $\flat$ .

I hope to be able to write to you very soon now about the last Sonata. Until then,

Yours truly, C. R.

Leipzig, March 26, 1897.

## XV.

Dearest Lady!

Before I pass on to the last Sonata, Op. 111, I want to try and answer your question, how one can recognise the second Subject of a sonata movement as such, with complete certainty. I can well understand your complaint of being now and then in doubt whether this or that motive is to be looked upon as the second Subject, because not seldom several motives of apparently equal value are near together; sometimes the Coda has a very melodic character, sometimes even already in the modulation-group motives appear which might lay claim to a certain independent significance for themselves. You can, however, with rare exceptions, be certain *that that motive is to be looked upon as the second Subject which first of all after the re-appearance of the principal Subject in the second part (that is to say, after the Development has taken place), appears also in the principal key.* Sometimes, as, for instance, in the Sonata, Op. 10, No. 1, in C minor, the second Subject, it is true, appears first of all in a different key (there in F major), but shortly after in C, while no other motive except this appears immediately after the principal Subject in the tonic. Sometimes the key in which the second Subject appears is somewhat obscure, as, for example, in Op. 28. In the first part

it begins in F $\sharp$  minor, and not until the close is unmistakably in A major; the second part accordingly begins in B minor and ends in the tonic, D major while the motive, else somewhat doubtful,



is heard in the second part at the same pitch as in the first. In the Finale of the great F minor Sonata Op. 57, the C minor key in which the second Subject appears, is in a similar manner obscured by the minor 2nd, *d*?



As, however, in the second part, after the re-appearance of the first Subject-group, this motive enters immediately afterwards in F minor, it is to be recognised in disputably as the second Subject. In the Sonata Op. 10, No. 2, the second Subject begins already at the 18th bar; that this motive is the second Subject is proved by its being once more the first one which appears in F major in the second part, after the completion of the first Subject-group. In spite of all, you may in future remain in doubt in certain cases, because sometimes there exists really no plastically worked out second Subject at all,—as, for example, in both first movements of the Sonatas Op. 54 and 109; but I hope I have given you a clue to many cases hitherto doubtful to you.

The first movement of the C minor Sonata, Op. 111, was originally intended as Sonata in *third* movement to another sonata never C minor Op. 111. completed, of which, however, several jottings exist in Beethoven's sketch-

books. An ingenious expounder of Beethoven's works has given the two movements of this sonata the headings "Resistance" and "Submission", which in the abstract sound tolerably acceptable; but that Beethoven himself can hardly have thought of anything of the sort can easily be understood from the fact mentioned above, for he would hardly have given to the *last* movement a "resisting," rebellious character. Such interpretations are certainly precarious! Thus another has sought to explain why Beethoven must have found himself constrained from *poetical* considerations, to fashion so sprightly and humorous a Finale to the Kreutzer Sonata; while this movement, as is well-known from *external* evidence, was borrowed from the Sonata, Op. 30. No. 1; the latter was then completed, later on, by the Variations which now form the last movement.\* The fourth movement of the string Quartet in B $\flat$  major, Op. 130, was originally in A major and was intended for the A minor Quartet, Op. 132; Beethoven transposed it into G major, and fitted it in to the former. Several more of such occurrences could be adduced.

In the Introduction to the Sonata, Op. 111, (as also in so many introductions to his string Quartets), Beethoven avoids the principal key. He grazes it only once, transiently, in the 2nd bar, then touches, equally transiently, F minor, B $\flat$  minor, A $\flat$  major, E $\flat$  minor, D $\flat$  major; until, in the 6th bar before the Allegro, he reaches the dominant, and now at last, eight bars later, he takes decided possession of C minor. The first movement reminds one in its character of the first movement of the "Ninth" and even the rhythm with which the introduction begins points to this. Also

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\*) A. B. Marx says, with reference to this sonata: "So wie die ganze Sonate erzählt (sic!) mag sich Beethoven in jüngeren Jahren oft geträumt haben, die grosse, stets beabsichtigte Künstlerschaft mit einem herzlieben Kunstgenossen als Waffengefährten vereint zu vollführen."

the three chords in bars 2 and 4, are quite similar in the Symphony.

Sonata.

Symphony.

The striking intervals of the grand Allegro Subject are to be found, although in an entirely different character, in the E $\flat$  major Concerto by Mozart (Kochel, No. 482).

Do not misunderstand me, if I cite such examples of the accidental coincidences of the great masters! Such meeting of great minds does not point to a dependence of one upon another, but, methinks, it is interesting to recognize how such characteristic progressions appear in all periods. Thus Rubinstein

also begins his D minor Concerto with the same intervals.

This, so to speak, inflexible motive, Beethoven has preferred to turn to good account very frequently, as well in its entirety as in part. Even the second Subject in A♭ major



is very soon obliged to give way to it again. Only in the second part does Beethoven allot greater importance to this latter Subject, especially when he transfers it, in F minor, to the bass.

A remarkable sequence is to be found four bars before the last *Tempo primo*:



Perhaps you remember what I have already said à propos of the Sonata for the "Hammerclavier", about the sequences occurring in the last sonatas more frequently than before. It is wonderful the ways and means by which Beethoven produces the principal motive at the commencement of the Development in large and small values simultaneously. Where this happens for the third time, it is difficult to unite the shake on *e* with the quavers, in one hand. I play, accordingly, as follows:—



The *ritardando* which Beethoven has prescribed in bar 8 and 9 after the return of the C minor signature must be a pretty considerable one, because otherwise Beethoven's demands on the right hand cannot be complied with:—



For bar 13 of the Allegro, the division of the note of the chord as recommended by Bülow,



is to be unconditionally accepted.

That this first sonata-movement belongs to the finest of all Beethoven has created, scarcely anyone will dispute; at all events it eclipses all the first movements of the sonatas Op. 101, 106, 109 and 110.

The indication of the *nuances*, which Beethoven has bestowed on it, is exceedingly careful, and whoever follows it conscientiously will at all events miss nothing essential; but truly, there still remains much to be read between the lines which no composer can convey by signs, no editor by explanations. For example, in the last nine bars the faithful observance of what is prescribed does not suffice; one must feel that with the intensifying of the melodic motive a considerable *crescendo* should always go hand in hand. Not till the penultimate bar may a slight *ritardando* enter, which, however, is quite indispensable, considering the sonorous bass notes, and the last skip into Contra-C.

When one speaks of the "supernaturally glorified sublimity and profundity" in Beethoven's last works, these epithets are probably used about none with greater right than about this Sonata, which I have never again heard reproduced by anyone in such congenial fashion as once by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. He played it, as Beethoven once more prescribes, "molto semplice", but with a clearness and such a mastery of form and contents, that the listener imagined himself uplifted into higher spheres, in spite of the almost analyzing rendering.— The time  $\frac{9}{16}$ , is seldom to be met with ( $\frac{3}{8}$ , with semiquaver triplets, might have been employed), still more rarely the times  $\frac{6}{16}$  and  $\frac{12}{32}$ , appearing later on. On this account everyone will be obliged first to learn how the land lies, in order to be able to understand and fulfil Beethoven's requirements. As he has prescribed at Var. 3, as well as at Var. 2, "L'istesso tempo", it is clearly evident that with the entry of the new time, exactly the last third of the bar in question should be filled up: in other words, in the second Variation two semiquavers are of as much value as three of them in the first. But certainly one must be clear that Beethoven has omitted—or forgotten—to indicate as triplets the figure now appearing:



It becomes doubly difficult to at once understand the Beethoven notation, because here (in contradistinction to the analogous  $\frac{6}{8}$  or  $\frac{6}{4}$  times), are grouped together not twice 3 semiquavers, but thrice 2. Of course the up-beat of Var. 3 is to be considered as the last third of the concluding bar (marked 2) of the 2nd Variation. Here likewise is wanting an indication that in the figure following the notes in pairs form triplets.



Had it been otherwise,  $\frac{18}{32}$  would have to have been prescribed. Beethoven soon returns to  $\frac{9}{16}$ , about which no further explanation seems necessary. It is worthy of note that Beethoven in all the Variations always follows the modulation of the Theme quite faithfully, and only in the last Variation but one undertakes a short excursion into other keys. Accordingly there are to be found in the entire, very extensive, movement, only about 20 bars which do not belong to the keys of C major or A minor. Equally striking is it that Beethoven in the separate variations never gives up the rhythm, once hit upon, even for a moment; not until the last Variation but one does this happen transiently, and indeed, simultaneously with the above-mentioned sole modulation into remoter keys. In connection with this, all the variations are most closely connected with one another, and accordingly in the entire movement no one real close or pause is to be found. The separation of the single Variations by rests, thought proper by so many, is thus not possible here.

In conclusion, I have still to go into a few details. In Var. 1, second part, bar 4, some want a tie between the 6th and 7th semiquavers of the bass. But Beethoven has in the entire variation consistently had the 1st, 4th and 7th semiquavers struck by one hand or the other, and one may well suppose, therefore, that here there is no slip in the Beethoven autograph. In the second part of Var. 3, the harsh change from *forte* to *piano* is to be strictly observed; it ought not to be displaced, i. e. hastened, by so much as a semi-demisemiquaver. The bass figure which appears first in Var. 4, and often returns in the further course, must always be performed in very strict rhythm, so that there come exactly three notes to a semiquaver; the accent on the first of each three notes, necessary for the purpose, ought to be very slight, in accordance with the prescribed *pianissimo*. Delicate *nuances* play the chief rôle in the whole of this second movement of the sonata. The first *forte* appears in the third Variation, to give place immediately in the 4th to an ethereal *pianissimo*, which then is only quite transitorily abandoned, for scarcely ten bars altogether, as then the whole movement dies away like a breath.—

One should not be able to find epithets enough, if one wanted to characterise the sonatas and their separate movements. Beethoven knew how to write equally perfectly as clearly, charmingly, characteristically, fervently, stormily, energetically, idyllically, naively, passionately and mildly, pathetically and elegiacally,—for each most delicate emotion of the soul and frame of mind Beethoven has always found musical expression on the spot. Voltaire's words, "Si Dieu n'exista pas, il faudrait l'inventer," should be translated: "If Beethoven had not existed, he would have had to be invented."

And now, dear friend, enough and more than enough about this, in the whole musical literature quite unique, Sonata-cycle of the greatest of all instrumental

composers. If I should have succeeded in rendering it, here and there, a trifle more intelligible to you and in giving you some good, practical advice, I yet deserve for this no special gratitude, for it has been the greatest pleasure to myself and the greatest enjoyment to occupy myself once more with these works in such a manner. "Wenn die Könige bauen, haben die Kärrner zu thun" ("When kings build, there is work for the bricklayers"). Farewell!

Yours, C. R.

*Interlaken, August 1897.*



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